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SFX

#241

SCI-FI LEGEND

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THE ORIGINAL KIRK
SPEAKS TO SFX

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TV PREVIEW

THE GOVERNOR
DAVID MORRISSEY
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New Episode Preview



Heroes Of Who

18-PAGE
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THE NEW
ACTION FIGURES

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AN UNEARTHLY CHILD

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We're still lobbying for this page's name to be changed to "the universe of *SFX*".

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Prod Ed Russell gleefully welcomes the View-Master back into his life.

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A THRILLINGLY NERVY HORROR FILM

The Telegraph



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THE INSIDE SKINNY

What your *SFX* chums are thinking about...

DAVE BRADLEY EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

RAVES

Met Martin Freeman to chat about the new *Hobbit* film. What a friendly chap.

RANTS

Not struck by the first episode of *Atlantis*? (But then I didn't enjoy the first ever *Merlin* either, although it grew to be a favourite show. So I'll try to give it time...)

BEHIND THE SOFA BECAUSE OF...

The Empty Child



RICHARD EDWARDS DEPUTY EDITOR

RAVES

Loving the idea of an Agent Carter series – '40s-set SHIELD-type action could be fun.

RANTS

I'm on board for *Episode VII*, but not sure about the origin movies. Do we really want to know where Han Solo came from?

BEHIND THE SOFA BECAUSE OF...

The Malus



NICK SETCHFIELD FEATURES EDITOR

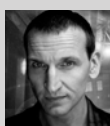
RAVES

Enjoyed the 90 Years Of The *Radio Times* exhibition at the Museum of London. A thrill to see original Frank Bellamy art.

Cautiously excited about *Gotham*. But I can't help feeling someone just commissioned *The Adventures Of Doctor Watson*.

BEHIND THE SOFA BECAUSE OF...

Daleks



RUSSELL LEWIN PRODUCTION EDITOR

RAVES

Got the DVD boxed set of the '90s *Spider-Man* cartoon: terrific stuff.

RANTS

Me on why Curtis's *About Time* is a sick abomination: <http://bit.ly/sftime>.

Glad *Pirates 5*'s put back. Pity it's not till 2067.

BEHIND THE SOFA BECAUSE OF...

Mr Sin



IAN BERRIMAN REVIEWS EDITOR

RAVES

Liking the sound of new Showtime horror show *Penny Dreadful*.

By the time you read this, *Doctor Who: The Vault* will be in the shops. It's got some glorious imagery of *Who* ephemera in it.

It's not "SFXy", but I recommend weird Canadian movie *Pin* (out on DVD 28 October).

BEHIND THE SOFA BECAUSE OF...

Scaroth, last of the Jagaroth



JORDAN FARLEY STAFF WRITER

RAVES

Very late to this party, but *Adventure Time* is pretty much the greatest thing I've ever seen. Mathematical!

Bigfoot, ghosts, aliens and a zombie, who knew *Grand Theft Auto V* was sci-fi?

Atlantis: a cautious thumbs up.

BEHIND THE SOFA BECAUSE OF...

Weeping Angels



JON COATES ART EDITOR

RAVES

A couple of books I can't wait to get my paws on: *Terminator Vault* and *The Making Of The Return Of The Jedi*.

Gravity looks incredible. Definitely one for the big screen, I reckon.

RANTS

Atlantis. Unintentionally wet.

BEHIND THE SOFA BECAUSE OF...

Davros



CATHERINE KIRKPATRICK DEPUTY ART EDITOR

RAVES

An enjoyable beginning for Agents Of *SHIELD* – good quips and fast-paced action.

Pricklepants is back! Can't wait to see the Halloween TV special *Toy Story Of Terror*.

Have my fingers crossed *Misfits* ends on a high.

BEHIND THE SOFA BECAUSE OF...

The Kandyman



DAVE GOLDER SPECIAL PROJECTS

RAVES

The new biography of Jim Henson by Brian Jay Jones is a riveting read, though be warned, the ending is very sad.

Loving Dan Boulwood's *It Came!* comic miniseries, right from the *Carry On* innuendo in the title to the brilliant mock B-movie posters that form the centre-spreads.

BEHIND THE SOFA BECAUSE OF...

Cyberman



ADRIAN HILL AD MANAGER

RAVES

I was 13 when I attended the 20th anniversary celebration of *Doctor Who* at Longleat back in 1983. And here I am about to celebrate its 50th! Fond memories of meeting all the Doctors and companions. Sadly many are no longer with us, but to me they will always be here.

BEHIND THE SOFA BECAUSE OF...

Sea Devils



TORY HADOKE WRITER AND ACTOR

RAVES

Uncovered footage of William Hartnell being interviewed: after 50 years there are still treasures to unearth.

RANTS

The *Doctor Who* Prom was wonderful – giving the music from the entirety of the classic series eight minutes was not.

BEHIND THE SOFA BECAUSE OF...

Daleks



ABIGAIL LEACHMAN WORK EXPERIENCE

RAVES

Definitely have my eye on the new space thriller *Gravity*. Can't wait to see how Alfonso Cuarón uses the visual effects.

RANTS

Kick-Ass 2 seemed very awkward. Doesn't beat the first one.

BEHIND THE SOFA BECAUSE OF...

The Silence



My relationship with *Doctor Who* began with the final days of Tom Baker. But I don't remember actually loving the show, identifying with it, until Peter Davison came along. He was my Doctor (although Jon gets the honour of wearing his face on the left there). It was 1981 and I was eight. The thing that I think new-era fans of the show miss is that *Doctor Who* is something we grew up with: it's meant to be scary, that hiding "behind the sofa" thing is not a fable, it's a very real part of British childhood. You're meant to learn about conquering fear from *Doctor Who*. It's there that you discover what makes friends, enemies and, yep, even romance (my first youthful crush was on Nyssa). You learn about travel and respecting other cultures while the Doctor shows you the wonders of the universe and you're meant to discover, while still in school, that wit and a sonic screwdriver are better tools than guns. If you're a grown-up science fiction fan and your first encounter with *Doctor Who* is Matt Smith, that's wonderful and you've very welcome in our gang, but you've missed the best part: you have to show it to your kids to understand why it's been such an obsession for us over the last 50 years. This month in *SFX* we celebrate that obsession – and get excited about the future – with 18 pages of interviews, features and previews, beginning on p48.

Allons-y.

PS If superheroes are more your thing, then check out *SFX*'s current standalone bookazine. *The Ultimate Guide To Superheroes* is on sale now! (Details p47)

Dave Bradley, Editor-in-Chief
@SFXDaveB

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MOTHER'S BASEMENT PRESENTS

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Dracula gets a makeover in Sky Living's new show.



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THE ODD COUPLE

A cop, a robot – together, they're *Almost Human*.



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GRIMM AND PROPER

The police procedural enters its third year.



ACCESS

ON SET WITH
PUPPETS!

TV SPOILER THREAT

SFX's unique system to help you decide whether a news story is safe to read.

GREEN: SAFE FOR ALL VIEWERS

It's spoiler free for folk watching at the pace of the UK's five former analogue TV channels. (Waiting for the DVD? We advise caution.)

AMBER: SAFE FOR DIGITAL VIEWERS

Will not be spoiling to anyone watching at the pace of UK digital TV, whether on cable, Sky or Freeview.

RED: NOT SAFE FOR ANY UK VIEWERS!

You might find spoiler information in here about shows that are yet to air in the UK (although they may have been broadcast in the US).

YONDERLAND

Power To The Puppets

The *Horrible Histories* team are journeying to a land far away

THE MUPPETS MAY HAVE MIGRATED

to the big screen some time ago, but Sky1 and the team behind beloved children's series *Horrible Histories* are bringing puppets back to prime-time with *Yonderland*, a fantasy comedy where anything goes... quite literally. At least in the town of Anything Goes – one of the many stops for Debbie (Of) Maddox during her quest to save the titular 12th land from the dark forces that seek to control it.

But rather than riff on Middle-earth, the team behind *Yonderland* are returning to the films they grew up with for inspiration.



Histories In The Making

THE STARS DISH MORE FACTS
ABOUT THAT LAND OVER YONDER...

ELDER SCROLLS

► Debbie discovers her fate in the Elder chambers at the start of her journey. "We each play one of the elders," says Farnaby. "I play a guy called Hippy Elder. They have to work out all these problems but his solution is always to take his clothes off. And that's all he really wants to do. So it doesn't matter what the question is, his answer is always 'Perhaps if we were to take off our clothes?' I have done some streaking."

FAMILY FRIENDLY

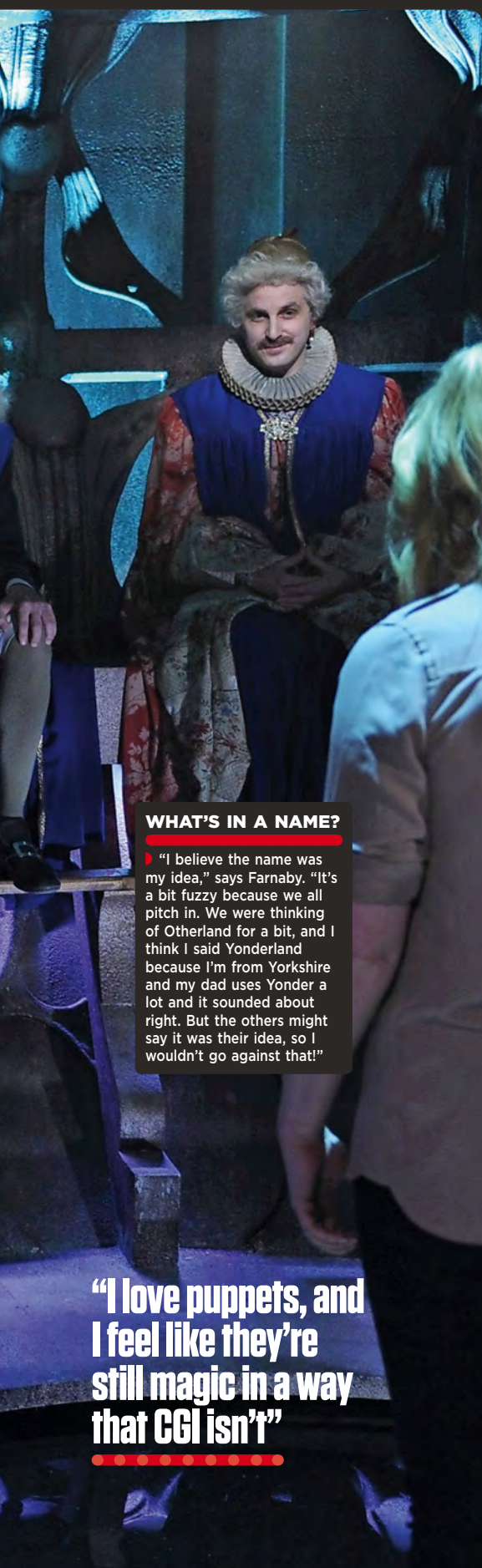
► *Horrible Histories* may have aired on a children's channel, but *Yonderland* has been designed to appeal to all ages. "We always said if it's something that only makes children laugh then it's a kids show and if it's something with swearing in then it's an adult show, and everything else is just a comedy," Rickard explains. "It's a family comedy, but in the same way as *Blackadder* was. We hoped the *Horrible Histories* audience would get it, but also an older audience as well."

MAN OR PUPPET

► The puppets were created by Pete Coogan and his team, many of whom worked on *Farscape*, while Coogan is a Henson veteran. "Imagine watching *The Muppet Show* but they're all CGI, there's nothing funny in that," says Lawrence. "There's a combination. Some are quite hi-tech animatronics and others are foam puppets and they're the most wonderful things. There was one yesterday, this ridiculously ancient cobweb-covered man whose voice is so ancient he has to be subtitled."



Just puppets
on a string...



WHAT'S IN A NAME?

► "I believe the name was my idea," says Farnaby. "It's a bit fuzzy because we all pitch in. We were thinking of Otherland for a bit, and I think I said Yonderland because I'm from Yorkshire and my dad uses Yonder a lot and it sounded about right. But the others might say it was their idea, so I wouldn't go against that!"

"I love puppets, and I feel like they're still magic in a way that CGI isn't"

"We all love Jim Henson's stuff: *Labyrinth*, *The Dark Crystal* and these epic fantasy journeys in films like *The Wizard Of Oz*," says Laurence Rickard, one-sixth of the *Yonderland*/*Horrible Histories* rep group. "The common theme of all those is this idea of someone very normal going through to a place that's very unusual, so that was the starting point for the idea of this normal mum from Birmingham who suddenly turns out to be hugely important to another world and doesn't quite believe it. Though it's never quite clear whether that's the fact of it or whether she's just having a bit of a breakdown!"

You'd be forgiven for thinking yourself a bit mad after being transported to a strange, puppet-filled land by a friendly fridge-dwelling Elf and a grumpy stick called Nick, but that's only the start of the insanity for Debbie (Martha Howe-Douglas). During *Red Alert*'s time on *Yonderland*'s Elstree set (where many of Henson's famed puppet productions were shot) we witness a knight's tournament, a familiar fantasy trope, but rather than jousting the participants are competing to see who can land the best kiss on a crone – played in classic Python style by a man (Jim Howick).

As the chosen one it's Debbie's duty to ensure the forces of good prevail throughout the eight-episode series, something that comes naturally to the mother of two.

"She's feisty. She's got a bit of bite, which is nice. And because she's a mum she's nurturing as well," says Howe-Douglas. "The characters she meets are idiots, mostly, so they become children too. There's always that dynamic with people that she meets in the world that she's always teaching them and showing them how to get things done and they learn from her."

Fortunately for Debbie, the bad guys are idiots too. Particularly big bad Negatus (Simon Farnaby), who *Red Alert* meets while he's disguised as lifestyle guru Dirty Eddie in an attempt to lure Debbie back to his evil lair.

"Negatus is at the start of his career as a bad guy," says Farnaby. "So he's got his lair, he's got three minions, and he's working on his bad guyness, but he hasn't got all the equipment necessary. When you meet him he's trying to buy a baddies' furnace that you throw people in but it's not working properly, so he complains to the guy he bought it off. He's not a fully up and running baddie, he's fledging."

"Half the time he's got bureaucracy to deal with, and red tape," Farnaby continues. "He hasn't



Martha Howe-Douglas is a *Horrible Histories* regular.



got the big budget because he has a boss, the Imperatrix, which you find out about later on. So he wants to be the big baddie, but he also has to work like a manager in charge of a branch and if his sums don't add up he gets into trouble."

Yonderland started life as an idea for a film that the two remaining members of the *Horrible Histories* crew, Mathew Baynton and Ben Willbond, dreamed up before being fully developed by the whole group in a writer's room. But even from the earliest stages the plan was to mix humans and puppets.

"We were supported by Working Title and Sky because that was always our vision and we kept thinking, is today the meeting where they go, 'Guys, we can't have puppets in this, it's a nightmare'? And they never did. And it is a nightmare, but it's going to be fantastic."

"Because we're an ensemble and we're playing lots of different characters there's quite a spectrum from people who are basically just humans to an imaginary alien race, and we wanted that spectrum to continue into the puppets," Baynton continues. "So it's not a show in which there are people walking around and then there are puppets walking around, it all feeds into a world which is full of very different looking creatures and people. It's like Mos Eisley in *Star Wars*."

With puppets something of a rarity on prime-time telly nowadays, the team also hope *Yonderland* will introduce a whole new generation to the wonders of felt and foam.

"I love puppets and I love in-camera effects, and I feel like they're still magic in a way that CGI isn't," Baynton says. "It's only now that we're doing it do we realise just how much of a wishlist project it is. And hopefully, for the generation that watch *Horrible Histories* and so on, I hope this will be as magical for them as *Labyrinth* was for us." **SFX**

Yonderland begins on Sky 1 HD in November.



► **SCI-FACT** *Dracula* executive producer Daniel Knauf was the brains behind HBO's much-loved *Carnivàle*.

HUNGARY FOR CHANGE

► "I think the only Dracula cliché we wanted to avoid was the Hungarian accent – it would have been nice, but people have made such hay out of it for comic effect that it brings a lot of baggage," Knauf explains. "But I think he's a more ruthless Dracula, certainly a smarter Dracula. Vlad Tepes [the real-life inspiration for Dracula] was a master strategist and a warrior. We wanted to bring those elements in."

DRACULA

Out For The Count

Bram Stoker's vamp goes *Dangerous Liaisons* in new TV twist on the legend



DRACULA? AGAIN? BRAM
Stoker's 1897 tale has to be one of the most filmed novels of all time, but Sky Living and NBC's new ten-part series

promises to make us look at the Count in a whole new light.

"The original pitch was we wanted to do *Dangerous Liaisons* with Dracula," executive producer Daniel Knauf tells Red Alert. "We wanted to do a costume drama with a lot of romance that is all revolving around Dracula. It's a bit different to the book!"

In this new take on the story, Dracula (Jonathan Rhys Meyers) is posing as a flashy American wooing Victorian Britain with new-fangled science. "[Series creator] Cole Haddon made this sandbox in which all the toys are Bram Stoker's characters, but they're allied against this secret society that is really the major baddie," Knauf explains. "This Order of the Dragon is even worse than Dracula, so all of a sudden we can make him an antihero in the story."

Book characters Jonathan and Mina Harker, Lucy Westenra and Renfield have all been reincarnated in the show, along with a

Van Helsing so obsessed that he's just as dangerous as Dracula – and an unlikely ally.

"Both Dracula and Van Helsing have been robbed of their entire lives by the Order of the Dragon, so they join forces against a third even more horrible enemy – but it's not a happy partnership."

One relationship that will hopefully be a little jollier is Drac's romance with Mina – like Francis Ford Coppola's 1992 movie, this series casts her as the reincarnation of his dead wife.

"Dracula knows that he's damned and that Ilona, who he loved, is probably in heaven, so he feels he's separated from her forever," Knauf explains. "But when he gets to know Mina he begins to understand it's more than just the physical similarity, and that she's connected to Ilona in some way."

If this sounds a bit lovey-dovey, Knauf is keen to point out that this Count still has teeth. "I don't think Dracula is a good guy and I don't think that even Dracula would think he's a good guy. We've got good, bad and worse in this show." **SFX**

Dracula comes to Sky Living in late October.



FAST DRAC

► *Dracula* is a fairly slim novel, with barely enough meat to sustain a movie, but Knauf says he and the writers' room have plenty to carry them over the season – and beyond. "We have seasons two and three sketched out if enough people watch and like it," he reveals. "Hopefully we'll be able to do it until we can't come up with anything, and believe me, we've got a very creative group."

RICE OF PASSAGE

► While love is a big deal for this Dracula, Knauf says he won't be entirely driven by his heart. "I love Anne Rice, I love what she did with *Interview With The Vampire* and all those books, creating the vampire as romantic antihero. But I really think that's been played out. I think it's time to just go back to badass vampires and by definition that's Dracula. This is not a sparkly, cuddly vampire."

Aerial Assault

SF TV ROUND UP

NEWBIES

► With *Agents Of SHIELD* conquering all before it, three more comic book-inspired shows are in the offing. Fox is planning a Batman prequel called **Gotham**, that will follow a young police officer named James Gordon in the years before he meets the Dark Knight. It's currently being developed by *The Mentalist* creator Bruno Heller. Also, NBC has enlisted David S Goyer to write a pilot for a TV series based on **John Constantine**, bringing the character to the screen for the first time since the 2005 Keanu Reeves movie. Marvel, meanwhile, is reportedly developing a series based around Captain America's **Agent Carter** - here's hoping Hayley Atwell signs up to reprise her role as Peggy.



► Having dabbled with movies on *Prometheus* and *Star Trek Into Darkness*, *Lost* co-creator Damon Lindelof is back on the small screen with **The Leftovers**. HBO has ordered a ten-episode run for the show, which focuses on the people left behind after the Rapture. Justin Theroux, Liv Tyler and Christopher Eccleston will star. *Continued on p14.*

DON'T QUOTE ME



"I'm a big boy. They said just don't use the internet for a couple of days. I handle shit. I'm very tough"

The Joker, the Penguin and the rest should be a doddle now that new Caped Crusader **Ben Affleck** has taken on his online haters.

"And now, ladies and gentlemen, for my first trick..."

my sci-fi

BECAUSE CELEBRITIES LIKE SF TOO

Vince Gilligan

The creator of the excellent and recently departed *Breaking Bad*, Vince Gilligan made his TV breakthrough as a writer-producer on *The X-Files*, as well as its spin-off series *The Lone Gunmen*.



► FAVOURITE SF/FANTASY FILMS

2001: *A Space Odyssey*. That movie still looks as good today as it did in 1968. Other than the digital readouts, it doesn't look dated as so many past visions of the future do. It's bittersweet when I watch it to think of all the things that, in 1968, it looked like we would have, could have, in 2001.

► FAVOURITE SF/FANTASY TV

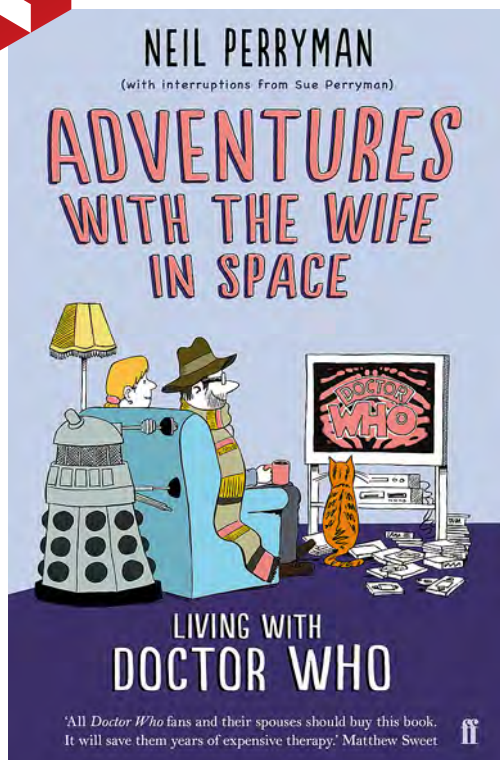
The Twilight Zone. It may not only be my favourite sci-fi show, but my favourite all-time show. A great, great show with beautiful writing. Rod Serling used science fiction and fantasy as a platform to write about issues of race and cultural problems, which the networks would never let you get away with back then unless you camouflaged it with a patina of science fiction. I also love original *Star Trek*, and *The X-Files*. It's still my second favourite job I ever had, and I was a fan of it before I worked on it.

► FAVOURITE SF/FANTASY BOOKS

I love Ray Bradbury. I was so sorry when he passed away. I saw him speak a couple of times, but I wish I had met him - just a great human being from everything I've heard. The most recent book of his I've read was *Something Wicked This Way Comes*.

► FAVOURITE SF/FANTASY GUILTY PLEASURE

It's less of a guilty pleasure and more of an undiscovered gem - *Carnival Of Souls*, the original from 1962. A great atmospheric horror movie, which most people who are not real genre geeks are not aware of. It was made for no money at all, and it creeps me out every time I see it.



ADVENTURES WITH THE WIFE IN SPACE

Doctor View

Popular *Who* episode blog regenerates into book

DOCTOR WHO BLOG ADVENTURES WITH

The Wife In Space has long been an SFX fave. Fan Neil Perryman and his definitely-not-a-fan wife Sue watched every episode of classic *Doctor Who* and recorded the results. It offers a fresh, illuminating and very funny perspective on a programme that's been analysed to death by fans. And now it's become a book...

"I was approached by one of the readers of the blog," says Neil. "In addition to being a *Doctor Who* fan, he claimed he was a publisher who could see its potential. Incredibly, he wasn't a fantasist!" It wasn't simply a case of transferring the blog to the page, however. "It's not a straight adaptation, which meant I had to learn to write in a completely different way – and fast."

It paid off. "It's about growing up and what happens when you decide to share your passion with the people you love," says Neil. "It's also an excuse for a load of jokes about *Doctor Who* and the people who watch it."

The book is coming out as the show heads towards its 50th anniversary. What will Neil and Sue be doing to celebrate? "We'll probably spend 23 November worrying about *The Wife In Space LIVE!* at the Folkestone Book Festival the following day. I just hope that the hotel they've booked us into has a telly." And what does Sue think of Peter Capaldi's casting? "She reckons he'll be 'dangerous', which I think is code for 'sexy'..." **SFX**

Adventures With The Wife In Space is published on 7 November by Faber & Faber.

Aerial Assault

SF TV ROUND UP

NEWBIES (CONT)

► *The Walking Dead* is about to get an undead little brother (or sister), with a brand new spin-off series. Original comic creator Robert Kirkman says the series will focus on a "new corner of *The Walking Dead* universe. The opportunity to make a show that isn't tethered by the events of the comic book has set my creativity racing." Syfy is developing a pilot for *Creature At Bay*, a kaiju-themed show from Bryan Singer's production outfit. And here in the UK, *Life On Mars* co-creator Tony Jordan is making pact-with-the-devil drama *Legion* for UKTV, while CBBC has commissioned *Eve*, a drama about a female robot living with a human family.



SHOWRUNNING

► HBO has announced that *True Blood*'s ten-episode seventh season (due next summer) will be its last. And *Almost Human*, the new android cop show from JJ Abrams and *Fringe* showrunner JH Wyman, has lost its showrunner before an episode has even aired, following the departure of former *Star Trek: TNG* writer Naren Shankar.

Continued on p.23.

SCI-FI FACT In 1997, *People* magazine named Garrett Wang one of the 50 most beautiful people in the world.

AFTERLIFE 83

Garrett Wang

Ensign Harry Kim
in *Star Trek: Voyager*



For seven seasons (starting in 1995), Ensign Harry Kim steered *Voyager* through the Delta Quadrant, exhibiting bravery in the face of peril, only to be denied promotion to Lieutenant. These days, actor Garrett Wang is acting in a slapstick comedy film called *Unbelievable!!!!* (unbelievablethemovie.com) with other veteran *Star Trek* actors, and is in his fourth year as director of *Star Trek* programming at Atlanta's enormous Dragon Con.

► Would you like to play Harry again? Yes! I already played him again in the episode "Timeless", from 15 years in the future. Now that it's actually 15 years later, I hope he's been promoted.

► What would Harry be doing now? Captaining a starship. Only a few people have knowledge of the Delta Quadrant, and his experience would be invaluable.

► Is there anything you think was unfinished about his story?

His love life. They touched upon it, and then ran away several times. It would have been nice for Harry to have some measure of stability in his relationships. And for me as well! I'm still looking for the right girl. Hopefully Harry is having a better time of it.

► Did you get any souvenirs from the set? I planned to take the operations console but when I tried, I realised it weighed almost a thousand pounds – it wouldn't budge. I didn't have room for it in my house anyway. The only thing I could have done was make it into a bar in my backyard.

► Is there anything from *Star Trek* you wish was real?

Oh yes, everyone could use a transporter. To be able to roll out of bed a minute before work started and just beam over there would be wonderful.

► What would it say on Kim's gravestone? "Here lies Harry Kim: duty-minded, a man of perseverance, and an officer who should have been promoted earlier."





Kristin Kreuk

Superman's first love is having issues with her Beast

FAIRYTALE FIXES

"We have a new showrunner [Brad Kern of *Charmed*] on board who is amazing. This season has a full arc – beginning, middle, end – and full season character arcs already mapped out which is so wonderful to me. I love where it's going because it's really about self definition. I want that for Catherine."

THE HEART GROWS FONDER

"We pick up three months later. She's a mess without letting herself be a mess. Catherine has been looking for Vincent, drinking coffee, possibly some alcohol, and running. Her life is falling apart around her without her even realising it's falling apart. But Catherine give up on Vincent? Not going to happen."

HAPPILY EVER AFTER?

"Catherine and Vincent were drawn to each other for obvious reasons. What their separation allows for is for us to test the hell out of it in the second season. You know that they love each other and that will always be there – but it's going to be tougher for them this year."

DADDY ISSUES

"Catherine's real dad will be a part of our villain land. Catherine's discovery that the man she thought was her father isn't will shake her to her core. It will force her to question her identity and send her on an introspective, 'who am I?' drive that all of the characters are going through this year."

NEW YORK STATE OF MIND

"The world will be much more rich this year, even though it will be much more New York. There will be more pace, higher stakes and people's lives are affected. There will be texture."

Beauty And The Beast's second season is now airing on the CW in the US. It will air on Watch in the UK.



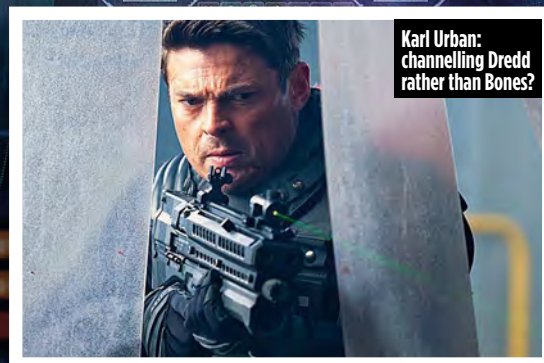
► **SCI-FACT** Karl Urban played both Cupid and Julius Caesar in *Xena: Warrior Princess*.



ALMOST HUMAN

Cops And Robots

FIVE THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT...
Fringe showrunner JH Wyman's android detective show



Karl Urban:
channelling Dredd
rather than Bones?

TECH IS A DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD



1 At the same time showrunner JH Wyman was wrapping up *Fringe*, he was also committing to a new series set in the near future where cops are paired with robot partners. Wyman says *Almost Human* is a reflection of his own discomfort with humanity's cyber obsessions. "I'm sort of terrified of technology," he confesses. "I love it but I'm terrified by it because my stock-in-trade is really human connection. I always write stories that life is valued by the human connections that you make. Doing research on *Fringe*, I discovered a lot of things that kept me up at night about technology, what's happening and personal freedoms. We're promised this utopian, beautiful version of the future with computers and technology and there is a very dark side to that. I'm interested in creating these little cautionary tales because being human is what it's all about. You can't lose that or we're all in trouble."

FRINGE LURED KARL URBAN

2 A self-professed fan of *Fringe*, *Star Trek* star Karl Urban said he was willing to walk away from film for a

while because of the calibre of *Almost Human*'s premise. "I was drawn to the character of John Kennex who has been in a coma for two years and wakes up to find he has a completely robotic leg and is responsible for a massive loss of life within his team and is now pushed into the front line of trying to protect and serve humanity," Urban explains. "I find that infinitely interesting. He's searching for himself and finds answers in the most unlikely source, which is his synthetic partner, Dorian. He's got an aversion to technology but is partnered up with a robot and ironically the robot is almost more human than human. So I wasn't looking to do television but once I looked at all of the elements involved I thought how can I turn this down?"

DORIAN IS SEEPED IN SCI-FI HISTORY

3 Looking to make his synthetic cop relatable, actor Michael Ealy (*FlashForward*) says he grounded the character in some classic performances. "I decided to base Dorian on three particular characters in movie history: Jason Bourne, Robert Patrick's Terminator and Jeff Bridge's Starman."

BRIDGING THE CYBER GAP

4 Ealy says one of the themes that sets *Almost Human* apart is its hopeful take on the future. "I'd like to describe Dorian as a reflection of humanity that we all take for granted daily. Ultimately, where he's going to go remains to be seen, but his desire to embrace humanity sets him apart from other machines and it gives a hopeful tone to the show. Often in futuristic shows, we see man and machine don't co-exist. I think what we're trying to say is these two *can* co-exist."

CHANGE IS IN ITS DNA

5 Urban says he's looking forward to seeing how the characters evolve, for good and bad. "It's my hope that Dorian puts John in touch with his humanity and in the best way, they learn from each other because they are both searching for what it is to be human. John does not remember vast tracks of his life. He has a lot of pain, guilt and frustration. I think consequently that he is quite closed off. Michael Ealy's character Dorian is a wonderful mechanism to open him up, and soften him up a bit over time." **SFX**

Almost Human debuts on 4 November on Fox in the US. A UK broadcaster is TBC.

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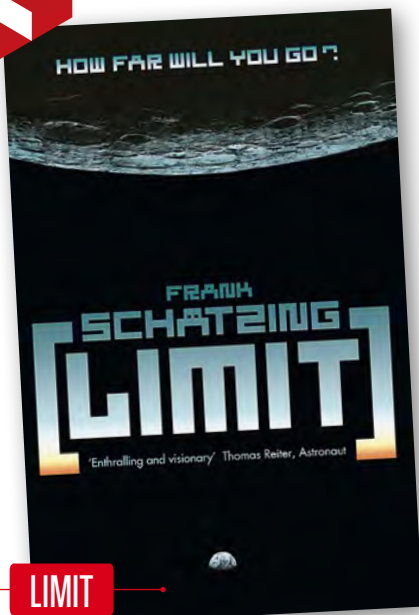
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LIMIT

New Moon

Germany's most successful SF writer shoots for the Moon

YOU MAY NOT HAVE HEARD OF HIM, but German author Frank Schätzing is a very big SF player. His 2004 underwater novel *The Swarm* has sold over 3.8 million copies worldwide, while his latest, *Limit*, has already sold 950,000 in Germany alone.

Set in 2025, *Limit* is based around the opening of the first-ever hotel on the Moon, connected to Earth by the space elevator that transports helium-3 back to terra firma. The tale gestated for years before hitting the page. "It was the end of the '90s when I read an article about helium-3 and the Moon," Schätzing tells Red Alert. "It said there are millions of tonnes up there, and if we could get it down to Earth, we could probably solve our energy problems for thousands of years."

"At the end of the '90s I was still thinking about a competition between the Americans and the Russians," he continues, "but now I thought it was much more interesting and much more likely that a race would take place between the Americans and the Chinese."

Despite the futuristic lunar backdrop, the thriller plot that unfolds – a cyber detective tracks down a hacker who's discovered sensitive information – is designed to be relatable to contemporary audiences. "My experience with science fiction is that, as long as you don't write a space opera like *Star Wars* or *Star Trek*, people like to read stories where they can imagine that they're still alive when this takes place. It makes it interesting from a psychological point of view if they can imagine they will still be alive to experience it." **SFX**

Limit is published by Jo Fletcher Books on Thursday 7 November.

THE DOSSIER

Pretty much every X-Man ever unites for **Days Of Future Past**

WHO'S INVOLVED?

- Bryan Singer directs
- Hugh Jackman is Wolverine
- James McAvoy and Patrick Stewart are Professor X
- Michael Fassbender and Ian McKellen are Magneto
- Peter Dinklage is Bolivar Trask
- Jennifer Lawrence is Mystique
- Nicholas Hoult is Beast
- Anna Paquin is Rogue
- Ellen Page is Kitty Pryde
- Halle Berry is Storm
- Evan Peters is Quicksilver
- Josh Helman is William Stryker



IS THIS A SEQUEL? A PREQUEL? A REBOOT?

► A flared collar here, a Kitty Pryde there, and that certainly looks like a huge mutant-hunting robot to us. Yep, Bryan Singer's Twitter teasers confirm that the new *X-Men* movie will draw heavily from Chris Claremont's 1981 classic storyline, which saw a Kitty Pryde from a horrific future send her consciousness back in time to prevent the mutants' Sentinel-powered apocalypse, cutting back and forth between the two eras. But as it acts not only as a sequel to the *First Class* prequel, but also as a prequel (and potential franchise refresher) to the original trilogy (Singer's opted for "inbetweenquel"), the story will undergo a little visit to the adamantium-bonding chamber.

► **SCI-FACT** *Days Of Future Past* screenwriter Simon Kinberg is part of the writing team on the new *Star Wars* movies.





WHO'S KITTY PRYDE AGAIN?

► As much as we love her, no studio's going to sink \$200 million on a movie focused on Ellen Page. Therefore Kitty Pryde's central involvement has been bumped in favour of someone with more snikt at the box office, with Kitty merely being the conduit for his time jump.

"The Wolverine of the future's consciousness is sent into his younger self," says Singer, "and it's nice that Hugh Jackman is able to play both parts, because his character is ageless, which is really unique."

But while Wolverine tries to save the future with the help of the First Classers, the original trilogists – including a resurrected Professor X, last seen being used to redecorate Jean Grey's gaff a new shade of "stentorious slaphead" – battle to bring Logan back from the past when (as the Dossier suspects) Kitty's timewarp goes a bit *Rocky Horror*.

Sorry Peter, but no one looks good with that hair and that tie.



Days of Future Past

SO WHEN WILL THIS ONE BE SET?

► Expect the majority of the movie to be set in 1973 with Charles Xavier finding life in the land of flares, Paisley shirts and Richard Nixon to be a miserable experience. "It's going to be quite a dark journey compared to the caddish character in *First Class*," reckons James McAvoy. Professor X is not only adjusting to life on wheels but is dealing with the "interest" of perennial mutant-botherer William Stryker (Josh Helman, following Brian Cox and Danny Huston).

Meanwhile Xavier's nemesis Magneto (Michael Fassbender) has been gathering like-minded rebels together, including the "less innocent" Mystique, once again played by – thank the gods of multi-sequel contract – Oscar-winning superstar Jennifer Lawrence. The azure assassin's actions are likely to be key to setting up the dark future of Sentinels and prison camps, as designed by industrialist and anti-mutant ideologue Bolivar Trask, played by Peter Dinklage (with Tom Selleck's moustache).

If the *Game Of Thrones* star is the biggest addition to the already massive cast, then Evan Peters is its most controversial. The young actor is playing lightning fast Quicksilver – Singer is shooting his scenes in 3,600 frames per second to get the right effect – who's notable for not only being Magneto's son but also for very much being bagsied by Joss Whedon for the next *Avengers* movie. Mutant fight!

WHEN WILL WE SEE IT?

► *X-Men: Days Of Future Past* is out on 22 May 2014.

ARKHAM ORIGINS

A Bat From The Past

Batman begins again in the prequel to *Arkham Asylum*



Batman: new and improved?

BATMAN: ARKHAM ASYLUM WAS

an award-winning game, beloved by fans – so news that the next game in the series was to be developed by Warner Brothers Montreal, not revered series creators Rocksteady, met with a chilly reception. Add to this the fact that the voices synonymous with Bats and the Joker, Kevin Conroy and Mark Hamill, would not be returning and *Arkham Origins* seemed like a recipe for disaster.

"Of course, there's no way of actually filling those shoes," acknowledges Roger Craig Smith, the new voice of a younger Batman. "Since I was a kid, the iconic representations of these characters were done by Mark and Kevin and to take that on in any capacity is both daunting and exciting."

Set five years before *Arkham Asylum*, *Origins* is the story of a slightly less badass Batman who must fend off eight of the world's deadliest assassins. As well as expanding Arkham City to the whole of Gotham, *Origins* adds an increased emphasis on Batman's detective skills, a remote claw gadget and a promising multiplayer mode.

"There are so many people who are passionate about this character," says Smith. "Everybody's pouring their heart and soul into the game and not thinking about the fact we all live and die on the reception of these projects. Doing this properly is of the utmost importance." **SFX**

Batman: Arkham Origins swoops into stores on Friday 25 October.

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► **SCI-FACT** *Divergent* star Theo James was Will and co's nemesis in *The Inbetweeners Movie*.

FREEZE FRAME

This month: is **Divergent** the next young adult sensation?

FORGET FILM STUDIOS' FRUITLESS

quest to find the next *Harry Potter*, they're all after a piece of *The Hunger Games* pie now. Exhibit one: *Divergent*, based on the YA novel by Veronica Roth, which sees another 16-year-old girl fighting the power in a dystopian future US.

In *Divergent*'s world society has been split into five factions, each representing a human virtue: the selfless (Abnegation), the peaceful (Amity), the honest (Candor), the brave (Dauntless) and the intelligent (Erudite). Don't fit into a category? Then you're Divergent, a threat to the system.

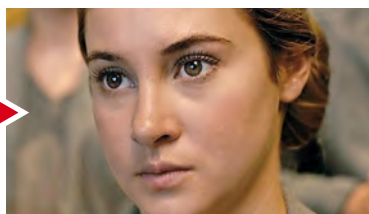
Shailene Woodley stars as Tris, a selfless, who leaves her family to join the brave after discovering she's Divergent.

As far as metaphors for being a teenager go, *Divergent* is about as high concept/heavy-handed (delete as you see fit) as they come, but with a successful novel behind it and Neil "Limitless" Burger helming, *The Hunger Games* may well have a deadly new competitor. **SFX**

Divergent will be released by Lionsgate on Friday 21 March 2014.



► Kate Winslet plays ruthless Erudite leader Jeanine Matthews – a woman with grand plans.



► Tris – a teen destined for greatness.



► In the future, grey is the new black.



► Tris and her brother Caleb say farewell to their Selfless parents.



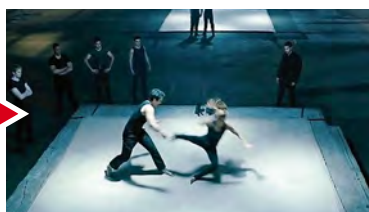
► Nikita's Maggie Q plays Tori, a Dauntless who knows Tris is Divergent and helps train her.



► The Dauntless army marches.



► Tris faces up to a fear in a simulation test.



► Tris's badass training gets off to a shaky start.



► Four (*Bedlam*'s Theo James) is another Divergent, and Tris's love interest.



► *Divergent*'s future may suck, but there's still time for some illicit fairground activities.



► Four's Divergent tattoos are a bit of a giveaway.



► Katniss would no doubt have put one right between her eyes.

THE BUZZ

DAVE



A young person is indefinably different and special, and must learn to fight a system that would stifle her? Genius. I can't believe that theme has never been explored before.

RICH



"Don't try and define me"? It's like some angry teen pop song's been turned into a movie, and I'll do my best to avoid finding out how that's going to play out. *The Hunger Games* sequel remains the only one of the current crop of young adult movie adaptations I have any interest in watching.

JORDAN



The Hunger Games with an even sillier premise? Can't say this trailer convinces me *Divergent* will be the next big thing. Expect to see it on the bargain shelf next to *Beautiful Creatures* and *The Mortal Instruments* come next summer.

RUSSELL



See the match last night? Yeah, bit dull but a draw wasn't a bad result. Pity Lampard missed that sitter near the end. Cahill played well. Oh, this? S'alright.

ABBY (WORK EXPERIENCE)



It seems that we're experiencing a continuous flow of genetically "imperfect" humans at the moment. *Gattaca* springs to mind, while the generic buff male saviour echoes *The Mortal Instruments* and *Twilight*. That said, I'm all for some good old fashioned "fight the system" action.

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► **SCI-FACT** The original Brothers Grimm featured on the old German 1,000 Deutsche Mark note.

GRIMM

Casket Case

Leading man starts season three in a coffin



SPOILER
THREAT

IN ITS SECOND YEAR,

Grimm put its characters through Hell, almost literally in the case of Nick Burkhardt

(David Giuntoli), who fell into a zombie-like coma in the finale, thanks to Baron Samedi and those nasty Royals. But according to the show's co-creators and executive producers Jim Kouf and David Greenwalt, things won't get any easier for our heroes in year three.

"The Royals want this Grimm," Kouf tells Red Alert, explaining why Nick enters this season in a coffin. "At a certain point, they had to make a move on him. We couldn't just keep talking about it. But that move is gonna have ramifications for a lot of different people – for Nick, for Eric Renard, Sean Renard, for Adalind. There will be ripple effects throughout the season."

"I think there's a lot more action this season," adds director/executive producer Norberto Barba. "Nick touches on that he has certain gifts he can use... Now with his predicament, he's going to run up against certain things that will call for that. Something bigger."

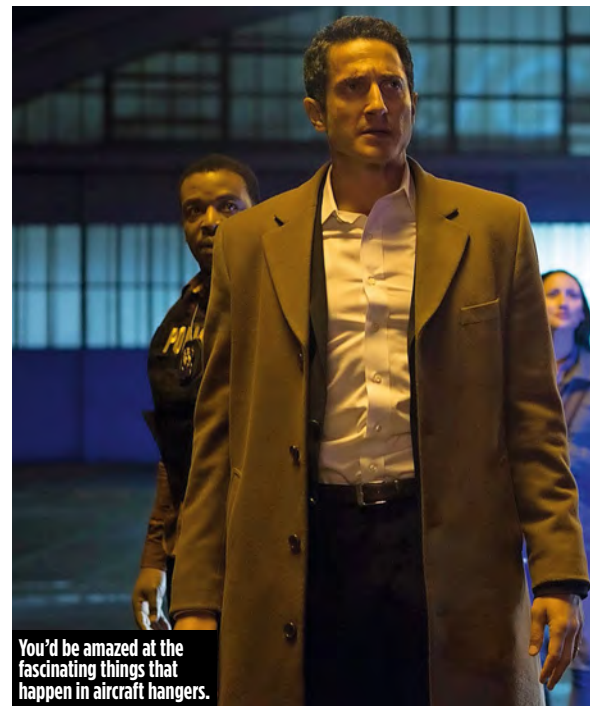
So just how long will Nick be out of commission? "A while," says Greenwalt

ominously. "There's a different Nick... [The supporting characters] are going to have to deal with him very directly. He's going to be in their face."

"The first two episodes are the second [half] of the last two episodes," says Kouf of the current storyline. "It's a big four-part deal between the last two episodes and the first two episodes. All this stuff comes to a head."

Giuntoli explains Nick's ongoing evolution: "Nick is inherently a good police officer and detective. Grimm blood is his thing. You want justice, you get angry when you don't expect it. But you kind of want the straight and narrow. And as the seasons go on, the more I am forced to lie. I go out of the role of an actual detective. So that's how he evolves. I think he also gets more confident and stronger. Now that he has his people, he's got this solid foundation. And he's really not afraid of much any more."

According to Giuntoli, *Grimm* fans shouldn't expect to see much of Nick in the season premiere. "I'm in a coffin for much of it," he says. "But it still will be called *Grimm*. I will be in the show. I'm not dead. But I'm taking a rest right now, and I wake up and I'm just irate. I'm just very bothered. I'm a zombie, and then I



You'd be amazed at the fascinating things that happen in aircraft hangers.

kind of destroy everything in my path. And they have to kind of handle me."

Among those characters who might have to deal with the new Nick is Juliette, his long-suffering girlfriend (played by Bitsie Tulloch). Last year, having finally learned Nick's secret, Juliette lost her memories for much of the season before regaining them. Tulloch happily tells Red Alert to expect a greater role for her character and her skills in the show's next chapter.

What kind of passport stamp do you get in the afterlife?

"I'm in a coffin for much of it. But it still will be called *Grimm*. I will be in the show. I'm not dead"



"I'm really looking forward to season three because I get to be more involved. I'm glad that she's finding a voice, just getting some power back, and getting more involved in the action and being helpful. She is a veterinarian, she's a doctor. So that will be interesting going forward." **SFX**

Grimm returns to NBC in the US on Friday 25 October. Season three will air on Watch in the UK in early 2014.

Aerial Assault

SF TV ROUND-UP

CASTING COUCH

► We've seen him "act" in car insurance ads, now Iggy Pop will voice the Caterpillar in **Once Upon A Time In Wonderland**. Genre regular Keith David will play the Cheshire Cat; Billie Piper has joined the cast of Sam Mendes-produced horror **Penny Dreadful**; *Fringe*'s John Noble has nabbed a major recurring role in **Sleepy Hollow**; original Parker David Graham will return for ITV's new **Thunderbirds Are Go!**. Rosamund Pike (below) will be the new Lady Penelope;



original **Tomorrow People** star Nicholas Young will play scientist Aldus Crick in the US remake; *Misfits*' Ruth Negga will appear in **Marvel's Agents Of SHIELD**; *Glee* star Grant Gustin will be **Arrow**'s Barry Allen/The Flash; Starz's **Outlander** adaptation has its Claire Randall, in the form of newcomer Caitriona Balfe. Graham McTavish, Gary Lewis and Duncan Lacroix will also star; and this month's **Game Of Thrones** casting news sees Brit Joel Fry on board as Hizdahr zo Loraq, and Icelandic band Sigur Rós signed up for as-yet unspecified roles. Maybe Westeros is going ambient.

DON'T QUOTE ME



"That's just ridiculous. It doesn't have anything to do with me and no one has contacted me. It's a very dumb idea"

Something tells us **Terry Gilliam** won't be watching **Twelve Monkeys: The TV Series**.

NEW AUTHOR

Pasi Ilmari Jääskeläinen



Known as Finland's answer to David Lynch, Pasi Ilmari Jääskeläinen teaches literature, has won numerous Finnish fantasy awards, and *The Rabbit Back Literature Society* (his first novel to be translated into

English) is published by Pushkin Press on Thursday 21 November.

► What would you write as the cover blurb for *The Rabbit Back Literature Society*?

Laura White, world famous children's author and the creator of the Society, disappears in a whirlwind of snow before everyone's eyes during a party thrown to welcome new member, Ella Milana. Slowly, disturbing secrets about Laura and the Society's past that have been buried for a long time come to light as Ella explores the nature of literature and death...

► *The Killing* and *Let The Right One In* have recently proved very popular with British audiences. Does your book help to demonstrate the wide range of genre tales coming out of the Nordic region?

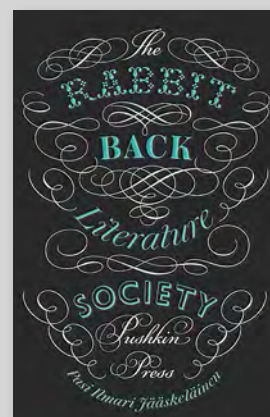
There is a lot more going on in Finnish literature than Nordic noir and horror, which I love but I guess that my stories are not all that gloomy. There is darkness in *TRBLS* but I believe that a certain amount of warmth and humour are also needed to tell a good story, even if it is a scary one. I like to mix different genres and *TRBLS* can also be read as a mystery thriller, a horror story, a ghost story, a fantasy novel and it's also a love story.

► *The Rabbit Back Literature Society* has been proclaimed as the literary equivalent of *Twin Peaks*...

When *Twin Peaks* aired in Finland in 1991, I was amazed because it was like watching one of my dreams on TV. Since I was five years old, I've been having eerie dreams about vampires, zombies and secret passageways leading to other dimensions. I use them in my stories all the time; it's my way to get rid of them before they drive me insane.

► Which three authors would you like to be compared with in a dream review?

Mikhail Bulgakov because *The Master And Margarita* is a good example of a novel that is considered classic literature but is also a full blooded fantasy with demons, witches and talking cats. I love the gothic characters in Neil Gaiman's graphic novels and the way he manages to combine imagination and deep cultural knowledge. Kurt Vonnegut is funny, sharp and entertaining and uses all the elements of science-fiction without getting labelled as a sci-fi writer.



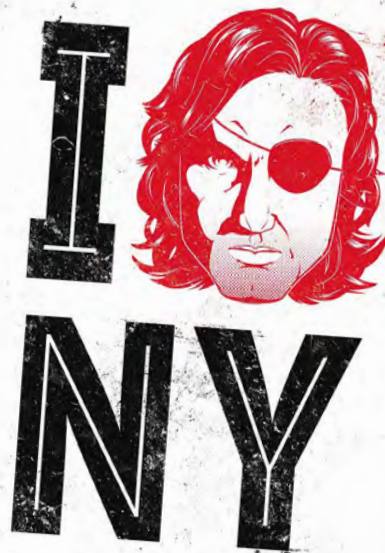
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► **SCI-FACT** Kevin Smith and Joss Whedon have both bought artwork from the Crazy 4 Cult exhibition.

IMAGE BANK

Pick up your visual scanning



1

WILD AT ART

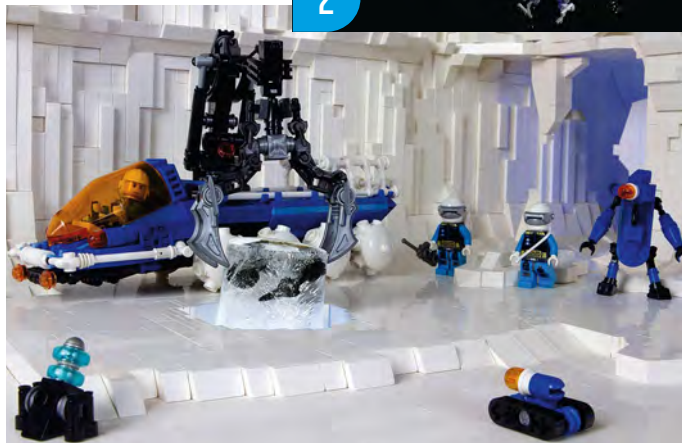
1 Every year LA's Gallery 1988 hosts Crazy 4 Cult, a show devoted to art inspired by cult films. *Cult Movie Art 2* (published by Titan on Friday 16 October) collects some of the exhibition's best works together in one place – Red Alert's highlights include "I Escaped NY" (above) by Adam Limbert and "Player 2 Has Entered The Game" (left) by Aled Lewis.

BRICKING IT

2 Lego. Is there nothing it can't do? Authors Peter Reid and Tim Goddard build spaceships out of plastic bricks and they've recorded the results in *Lego Space: Building The Future* – a book packed with photos of a bricky final frontier, and instructions for building the models yourself. It's published by No Starch Press in November. <http://nostarch.com/legospace>



2



LOKI/JIM

3 What do you get if you mix vampires with a god of mischief and a dash of indie cool? The answer can probably be found in Jim Jarmusch's *Only Lovers Left Alive*, where a couple of vamps (Tom "Loki" Hiddleston and Tilda Swinton) rekindle a centuries-old romance. It screens at the 57th BFI London Film Festival, which runs until 20 October. www.bfi.org.uk/lff



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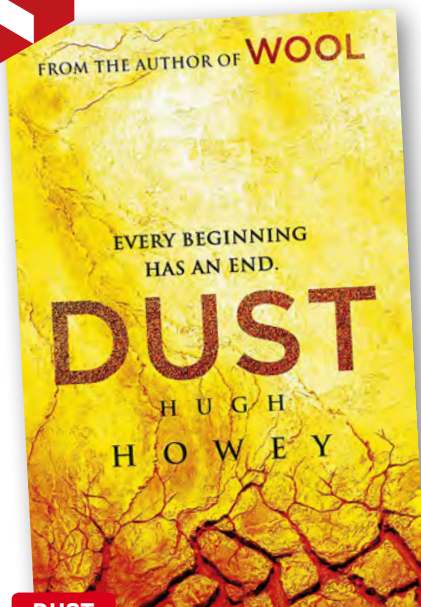


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DUST

Dust Up

Hugh Howey on his follow-up to *Wool* and *Shift*

HAVING INITIALLY RELEASED

Wool and *Shift* – the first two instalments of the Silo trilogy – in serialised form online, Hugh Howey decided that his highly anticipated final volume had to come in a single dose. “The cliffhangers were just too cruel for readers so I thought that it would be unfair to have them stop reading at any one point,” Howey tells Red Alert. “I’m glad I did that because all the feedback so far is that people are shooting through the whole thing in two or three days.”

Centring on a band of isolated survivors in a huge underground bunker after a mysterious apocalypse, *Dust* brings Howey’s claustrophobic tale to its conclusion.

“It picks up at the nexus of *Wool* and *Shift*, and also wraps up the various storylines,” Howey teases. “You can expect a lot of things to go wrong and for things to get a lot worse before they get better. The question is whether there’s going to be a happy or a terrible ending. I’ve tried to leave a little room for hope but you have to crawl through some pretty rough situations to get there.”

With former upstarts Juliette and Lukas now in charge, *Dust* sees a new generation rising to the fore. “This happens with every revolution and it’s happening right now,” explains Howey, who wrote *Wool* against the backdrop of the Arab Spring. “I read a lot of history and you soon realise that it’s much easier to tear things down than to build them up again. The challenge for Juliette and Lukas is to not be worse than the people they replaced.” **SFX**

Dust is published by Century on Thursday 24 October, and is also available as an ebook.

WIZARDS VS ALIENS

Wizards Are Back For War

Russell T Davies reveals that series two is bigger but definitely “not darker”

EXCLUSIVE
RUSSELL T DAVIES
INTERVIEW



IF IT AIN'T BROKE, DON'T

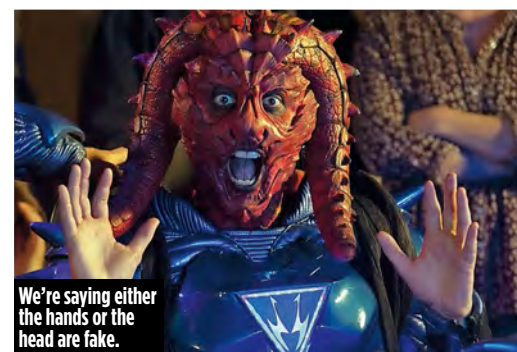
fix it is series creator Russell T Davies’s attitude to season two of CBBC’s deliciously bonkers *Wizards Vs Aliens*. “Last year it worked,” says the former *Who* producer of his current hit, in which teenage spellcaster Tom and geeky mate Benny battle some impressively tentacled aliens. “It got great viewing figures. Everyone was happy with it. So we had the confidence to say, ‘Kids love it! Let’s push it even further.’”

► So what’s in store for season two?

Can I delight you by being the first science fiction producer ever to tell *SFX*, “Our second series is *not* darker!” It’s partly because we set the whole thing up in advance. When *Sarah Jane Adventures* came to an end so suddenly, so sadly, we then had a good year to work *Wizards Vs Aliens* up. So the changes are quite minor in series two. Literally, I didn’t like one colour of the kitchen wall. So that’s changed. This is hardly exclusive interview material!

► There must be more than that?

We’ve added one creature. Annette Badland has got a mystical cave that she lives in, and



we had one story that had this hilarious creature, Hobbledy Hoy. It’s a little puppet that lives in a cage. He came in for one story and I loved him so much I said, “Let’s keep him!”

► Series one steered clear of teen romance...

Well, yes, that’s not what it’s here for. It’s interesting. In the very first story this series we introduce a girlfriend for Tom, a character called Chloe who is a schoolgirl wizard. But you have to make certain with that that you’re not repeating *Wolfblood* moments. You look at CBBC and go, “Well, *Wolfblood*’s filling that gap very nicely.” *Wolfblood*’s got the older teenagers and the strong teenage storylines, so it’s not our place to do that. I mean, we do have a romance element, and it’s played beautifully, but Chloe is there more for the fun and gags and the chase. It’s keeping the balance across the whole series and across the whole of CBBC as well.

Romance is not what the show is. It’s about two boys. It’s about being with your best



Time to rejoin the fight against the Nekross...

friend. One of the best stories this year is Gareth Roberts's story where their friendship falls apart. If you're watching that when you're eight there is nothing more huge in your life than when you argue with your best friend.

Anyway, the women in the show aren't sold short. Annette Badland is just amazing and Gwendoline Christie as Lexi, for god's sake! You don't waste an actress like that. She's stunning and we're doing more and more and more stuff with her.

► **How is your partner? Are you still keeping your workload light to look after him?**

My boyfriend is thankfully stable at the moment, so I'm slowly getting back to work. I've actually written the season finale to *Wizards Vs Aliens* which is just fantastic! It's called "All-Out War" and it is! It throws everything, plus the kitchen sink, into the mix. That was the first script I'd written in two years. That got me sort of shaking off the dust. I'm back! (With caveats.) It's a long time since I've written a season finale. I didn't realise how much I missed them. **SFX**

Wizards Vs Aliens returns to CBBC on Monday 28 October.

news warp

ALL FACT, NO FILLER

► **Hugh Jackman** cast in Neill "Elysium" Blomkamp's new film **Chappie**

► John Williams's **Star Wars** theme voted UK's favourite film soundtrack in BBC Sound of Cinema poll

► **Buffy The Vampire Slayer** artist **Georges Jeanty** to perform drawing duties on Dark Horse's new **Serenity** comic

► **Kickstarter** campaign raises enough money to build a **RoboCop** statue in Detroit

► Scientists at **MIT** find a way to give photons mass, potentially paving the way for **real-life lightsabers**

► Abandoned **Star Wars 1313** game would have featured our favourite bounty hunter **Boba Fett** as its central character

► **James Cromwell** is sole genre winner at this year's **Emmy Awards**, picking up Best Supporting Actor for *American Horror Story*

► **Bryce Dallas Howard** in talks for fourquel **Jurassic World**

► **Agents Of SHIELD**'s season premiere grabbed over 20m viewers, according to ABC

DON'T QUOTE ME

"It's kind of fun when the movie's coming out. It's like having a horse in the race. And they're lining up, and they're off! And you're rooting for your horse. And in this case, the jockey fell off the horse and you came in last"

It was a case of RIP for *RIPD*, but **Jeff Bridges** is still chipper enough for a horse racing metaphors.

© REX FEATURES (1)

► **SCI-FACT** R2-D2 made a cameo in *Star Trek Into Darkness*. He also appeared briefly in JJ Abrams' first *Trek* movie.

STAR WATCH

All the latest info on Disney's new ultimate weapon

WITH

Lucasfilm still keeping *Episode VII* intel on the hush-hush (if only the Empire had been so careful with its Death Star plans), the most concrete *Star Wars* news this month came from the unlikely source of Disney CFO Jay Rasulo. Speaking at a conference call with investors, the moneyman confirmed that the two spin-off movies would be "origins story film[s]". Alas there's no confirmation yet on who the subjects will be, but the smart money's still on Boba Fett and Han Solo.

Meanwhile, JJ Abrams talked *Episode VII* with *Entertainment Weekly*, but only in the vaguest possible terms. "I would say we are working really hard to make a movie that feels as emotional and authentic and exciting as possible," he, er, revealed. That'll be the anti-*Episode II*, then.

Adding more weight to the "Force is strong with this one" rumours that original trilogy stars Mark Hamill, Harrison Ford and Carrie Fisher will be back, Hamill's mate Robert "Freddy Krueger" Englund (who himself auditioned for Han Solo back in the day) says that the man still known to most as Luke Skywalker is currently hard at work getting back to his Jedi fighting weight. "They've got Mark in the gym," he said. "Because Mark's coming back as Luke Skywalker. They've got him doing his sit-ups."

It looks like Wookiees (or very tall Ewoks) will also be making an appearance in *Episode VII*, as Lucasfilm and JJ's Bad Robot production company have put out a casting call for an "untitled studio feature", looking for a man "7ft to 7.3ft tall with a slim/thin build and upright posture. Not too worked out or too 'thick set' especially in the shoulders. Broad facial features would be a bonus." Original Chewbacca Peter Mayhew is 7' 2".

If Chewie is back, he might well be flying the Millennium Falcon. *Latino Review* reported that the interior of the fastest hunk of junk in the galaxy has been built on *Episode VII*'s Pinewood set. **SFX**

NICK SETCHFIELD'S

DEVELOPMENT HELL

Your monthly glimpse into Hollywood's hoped-for future

SPADER POWER! THE AVENGERS – AGE OF ULTRON

► The never-knowingly-unquotable **Joss Whedon** is talking up his casting of James Spader as cyber-bad Ultron in the *Avengers* sequel. “Spader was my first and only choice,” he tells Marvel’s web show *The Watcher*. “He’s got that hypnotic voice that can be eerily calm and compelling, but he’s also very human and humorous. Ultron is not HAL. Spader can play all of the levels. He’s the guy to break the Avengers into pieces.” Yes, tremble fools, before the senses-shattering power of Ultron’s jigsaw ray! Don’t bank on an encore by Pepper Potts, though. “I don’t think so,” **Gwyneth Paltrow** tells Hitfix. “Nobody has asked me. My phone has not rung for *Avengers 2*.”

THE BALD TRUTH! BATMAN VS SUPERMAN

► Get set for a more grizzled Dark Knight, one who's "tired, and kind of weary and seasoned". No, not a description of Ben Affleck's mood after hitting Twitter the day his casting was announced – they're the words of Warner Bros CEO **Kevin Tsujihara**, a man pleasuring each and every one his shareholders by declaring that no less than a remarkable "12 to 14" pictures are on their way from DC Entertainment. Surely there's room for an Ace the Bat-Hound flick among that lot? *Breaking Bad*'s **Bryan Cranston**, meanwhile, has dismissed reports that had him locked down for a dizzying six turns as Lex Luthor. "Six? This is all news to me. I think

that maybe my name is banded about because I'm known to be bald. 'What bald guy can we get?' The reality is they can take any actor and shave his head or put a bald cap on him."

**MOST IMPENETRABLE,
DUDE!**
BILL AND TED 3

For decades now the SETI project has been scanning our skies for a spark of communication from some

WHAT SORCERY IS THIS? FANTASTIC BEASTS

➤ Warner Bros! Activate emergency JK protocol! Yes, facing a distinctly boy wizard-shaped hole in their box office future, the studio behind the *Harry Potter* franchise has persuaded creator **JK Rowling** to pen a spin-off film. Inspired by Hogwarts homework essential *Fantastic Beasts And Where To Find Them*, the new franchise will focus on the textbook's author, Newt Scamander. "Newt's story will start in New York, 70 years before Harry's gets underway," Rowling reveals, removing the rubbish stick-on beard of her Robert Galbraith disguise. "Although it will be set in the community of witches and wizards, [it's] neither a prequel nor a sequel to the *Harry Potter* series, but an extension of the world... I always said that I'd only revisit the wizarding world if I had an idea that I was really excited about and this is it"



unfathomable alien intelligence. Last month it picked up a scrambled transmission from what appears to be the inside of **Keanu Reeves'** head. "There's darkness out there that's keeping it from happening," the arch dude told MTV, sharing the reasons why *Bill And Ted 3* has singularly failed to reach the screen. "It's not winning right now. It's that part of the story where it's looking grim. It's the dark period! It's the *Apocalypse Now* of pre-production. It's *Heaven's Gate*. That's the part of the conspiracy. It goes to a whole other universe. It's like part of an M field. It's a B&T field." Earth's finest symbolologists and lexicologists are even now poring over this cryptic dispatch, convinced it holds significance for us all.

PAINT IT BLACK! DOC SAVAGE

Clearly tired of laughing like a goose atop his tottering stash of *Iron Man 3* loot, **Shane Black** is focusing on Doc Savage, his big-screen take on the pulp mag hero. Expect a dose of Freudian analysis among the globe-spanning peril... "We kept it in the '30s," he tells IGN, "[but] we beefed up the rationale behind what it would take to be a perfect person, and to be trained as such from childhood and how that would scar someone. And what it would take to be a parent who is capable of inflicting that on your kid." And just who do you cast as the ultimate physical specimen? "When people look at him, they're overawed by the symmetry and perfection that he exudes. I don't know that you could use, like, James McAvoy as Doc Savage. You couldn't do it. He's a fine actor, but we need someone big. I don't know who we'd get." Ah, Charles Hawtrey, taken too soon.

ARE WE NOT REMAKES? THE ISLAND OF DR MOREAU

"Not men! Not beasts! Part man... part beast! Things!" No, not the mission statement for Motörhead but a line from 1932's *Island Of Lost Souls*, the big-screen's first crack at adapting **HG Wells'** classic novel from 1896. The tale of a disgraced surgeon creating unholy human-animal hybrids on a remote tropical isle – long rumoured to be the dark secret at the heart of '70s kids show *Animal Kwackers* – it was remade in 1977 and 1996. Now Warner Bros and Appian Way are teaming on a brand new take, one that will push the story into a contemporary setting and play on the enduring

resonance of its anti-vivisectionist themes: "a sci-fi film with a topical ecological message," no less. **Leonardo DiCaprio** produces.

YO HO WHOA... PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 5

Jack Sparrow's fifth voyage just got snagged in seaweed. Originally scheduled for release in the franchise-filled summer of 2015, *Pirates Of The Caribbean: Dead Men Tell No Tales* now looks set to rock up sometime in 2016. "We have an outline everyone loves but the script is not done," producer **Jerry Bruckheimer** tells *The Hollywood Reporter*. "We want a script that everyone's signed off on and a budget that everyone's signed off on. We're supposed to start in March and you start spending a lot of money now... How do you budget an outline?" This is the sound of a newly cautious Bruckheimer, bruised by the performance of this summer's *The Lone Ranger*, a tone-deaf take on the Western icon that stands to bleed Disney for \$190 million. The studio ends its first-look deal with Bruckheimer in 2014 but he'll continue to wrangle *Pirates* for the Mouse House.

SSSSSEQUELLLLL! WORLD WAR Z 2

Seems you just can't keep a good zombie pandemic down. This summer's *World War Z* triumphed over a troubled shoot and rumours of budgetary blow-outs to carve a respectable slice of box office – \$536 million worldwide, enough to convince Paramount to consider recalling the undead hordes for a sequel. "We're certainly talking about it," says star **Brad Pitt**. "We have so many ideas on the table from the time we spent developing this thing and figuring out how the zombie worlds work." Director **Marc Forster** wants to keep the character beats that made the first one a cut above the standard brain-chomping jolt-fest: "If you're going on a second journey you want to keep that humanity intact because it's a continuation about how humanity will try to survive... I think that's the key."

"I don't know that you could use, like, James McAvoy as Doc Savage. He's a fine actor but we need someone big"

ALSO BURNING



Downton Abbey's **Jessica Brown Findlay** joins Daniel Radcliffe in *Frankenstein...* **Tom Hiddleston** replacing **Benedict Cumberbatch** in *Guillermo del Toro's* *Crimson Peak*... **Will Smith** back in the frame for *Independence Day 2*... **Jack Black** in negotiations to star in Sony's *Goosebumps*, based on the RL Stine book series... Relativity bringing SF graphic novel *Anomaly* to the screen... *Mama* director **Andres Muschietti** in the frame for Universal's *Mummy* reboot... Twentieth Century Fox shooting down reports that **Arnold Schwarzenegger** is reteaming with James Cameron for *Avatar 2*... **Aaron Eckhart** starring in horror tale *Incarnate*... *Evil Dead* remake man **Fede Alvarez** helming *Dante's Inferno* video game adap... *Transformers: Age Of Extinction* now arriving 27 June 2014, *Terminator 5* pushed to 1 July 2015, helmed by *Thor: The Dark World's* **Alan Taylor**... **Julianne Moore** joining *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay*... **Luca Calvani** scoring lead villain in *Guy Ritchie's* *The Man From UNCLE*... **Neil Marshall** remaking Norwegian cult hit *Troll Hunter*... **Jared Harris** joining *Poltergeist* remake for MGM... **Roland Emmerich** talking up rebooted *Stargate* trilogy... **David Cronenberg's** *Shivers* getting the reboot treatment... **Katee Sackhoff** joining horror tale *Somnia*... and many, many more...

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NEXT MONTH!

ISSUE 242

On sale Wednesday 13 November



THE HOBBIT: THE DESOLATION OF SMAUG

Return to Middle-earth in Peter Jackson's latest epic!

DOCTOR WHO

We talk to Matt Smith and David Tennant – together!

THE HUNGER GAMES

The inside word on the hottest sequel of the year!

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Terry Pratchett! *An Adventure In Space And Time!* *Almost Human!* *Short Circuit!* *Defiance!* More! More! Ronald D Moore!

● All contents subject to change. Coincidentally the last words heard by humanity upon the arrival of the Dread Arbiters of Kroom in 2019 (spoilers, Earth scum!). Go to www.sfx.co.uk for the truth.

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WHERE THE GEEK...

Pohl Position

David Langford pays tribute to the legendary Frederik Pohl



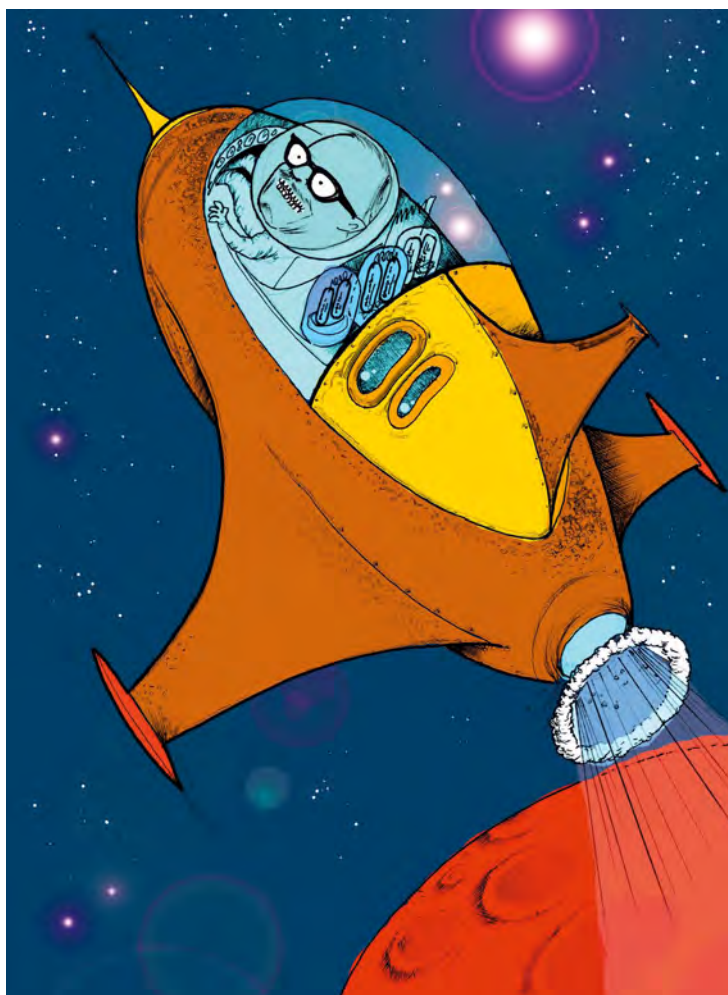
► SF writer David Langford has had a column in *SFX* since issue one.
 ► David won his first SF award – the Nova for Best British Fanzine – for *Twif-Ddu*, way back in 1977. He has received 29 Hugo Awards throughout his career.
 ► His celebrated SF newsletter can be found at <http://news.ansible.co.uk>.

What an astonishing career Frederik Pohl had, one of the longest in SF. It began with a poem in *Amazing Stories* in October 1937, when he was 17, and ended with a jokey post to his Hugo-winning blog on 2 September 2013, the day he died at age 93.

In between... many things happened. With Isaac Asimov, James Blish and Cyril Kornbluth, Pohl was in that notorious 1938-1945 fan group the Futurians, whose escapades he described in *The Way The Future Was*. Soon he was simultaneously editing awful pulp-SF magazines and writing for them under pseudonyms. After WW2 he became a literary agent and a pioneer SF anthologist while moving to better mags like *Galaxy* and *If* – which won three 1960s Hugo awards while Pohl was editor.

It's his fiction that's best remembered. With Kornbluth he wrote the famed *The Space Merchants* (1953), a funny, pointed, prophetic satire whose massively overcrowded USA is dominated by rival ad agencies. With *Mad Men* in charge and planning to beam ads directly into people's retinas, contract-breaking is a worse crime than murder and the underclasses are fed on "Chicken Little", an artificial culture of chicken-heart tissue: fast-food science is only now catching up. Customer loyalty gets boosted by lacing junk food with addictive drugs, and the Venus colony programme is hard-sold through mendacious TV commercials.

The other Kornbluth collaborations are well worth reading, especially *Wolfbane* (1959) – where Earth has been kidnapped by alien robots who use people as components in their servo-mechanisms. Kornbluth died young, though, and Pohl did so much more. His stories moved from slick farce and black comedy (as in "The Midas Plague", where automated overproduction leads to Americans meeting enforced user quotas by 24/7



He was, by US standards, daringly left-wing

an unknown destination, in a gamble like Russian roulette. One in 20 crews get rich from Heechee treasures or scientific discovery; three in 20 don't come back. The hero, a chronic loser who became a winner, has a guilt complex the size of Jupiter about how – as slowly emerges in flashback – he did it. Unforgettable.

Still darker, psychologically, is *Man Plus* (1976), describing an astronaut's cyborg adaptation to survive the gruelling Martian deserts. No *Six Million Dollar Man* wish-fulfilment here, just a steady

guzzling, swilling and general overconsumption) to thoughtful tales like "Day Million", a jolting evocation of future shock, and two bizarrely different takes on the SF problem-solving tradition: "The Gold At The Starbow's End" and "In The Problem Pit".

Personally I have a soft spot for the novels Pohl wrote with another SF golden oldie, Jack Williamson (1908-2006). One example: their 1964 *The Reefs Of Space* features fairytale asteroid "islands" built by the vacuum-dwelling equivalent of coral polyps and crowded with colourful life.

But *Gateway* (1977) is his finest novel. Long, long ago the alien Heechee visited our solar system and abandoned lots of little FTL starships in a tunnelled-out asteroid. Each can take you to

transformation away from human appearance and even – with a computer interface handling his reflexes – human thought patterns.

Naturally Pohl collected virtually all the SF awards, not just the Hugo (four times; seven counting *If* magazine wins) and Nebula (twice) but life achievement honours that lesser authors can only dream about, like the SF Writers of America Grand Master award, the French Prix Utopia, and entry to the SF Hall of Fame. He was always funny, never pompous, and by US standards daringly left-wing. One of the greats. I miss him already. **SFX**

David Langford met Fred Pohl at a convention and was too overawed to say much.

...SHALL INHERIT THE EARTH



Cast Away

US columnist Bonnie Burton loves a good casting rumour...

Gabriel Byrne as Boba Fett? Christopher Walken as Darth Bane? *Star Wars* casting rumours are something of an age-old tradition amongst fans. As bizarre as they may seem, rumours like these and many more were rampant long before blogs and social media ruled journalism. Ain't It Cool News published that Walken was indeed confirmed as Darth Bane in the prequels on 13 July 2000. And ironically on the same date a year before, AICN posted that Byrne was hinting at a role in *Attack Of The Clones*. Go ahead and google it – while you're at it, search the phrase "N'Sync and *Star Wars*." Good times.

Of course, now it's relatively easy to start a rumour in the hope it will come true. I know... I am guilty of it. I've lost count how many times I tweeted "Benedict Cumberbatch would be a perfect Thrawn in the next *Star Wars* movie." After working for Lucasfilm for almost a decade, I should know better.

I'm not the only one. In fact, a year ago, a desperate fan made up a rumour that a *Star Wars* live-action TV show called "*Star Wars: Reclamation*" was already underway. Instead of fact checking, bloggers ran with the story and supposedly seasoned journalists weren't far behind. Of course, it never came to be. But why double-check sources when you can get traffic hits from a sensational headline?

Fans aren't the only ones to blame. The minute an A-list actor says he wants to be in the next *Star Trek* it's suddenly news that they are "in talks" to play the role of the century... when in fact they merely said they *wish* they could be cast. Press junkets are rife with lazy questions such as "If you could play any role what would it be?" or "Which movie would you kill to be in?" from journalists desperate for a sensational headline.

All it takes is one fan to tweet a rumour then 100 others to retweet it. Then a fan blog-posts it as



news, and a much-larger geek-centric blog will post it and finally a "trusted" mainstream news site will post the news as gospel. Before you know it, the director is scratching his head wondering when that certain A-list celeb was cast without his knowledge.

Oddly enough, rumours run so rampantly that when real casting news hits, it takes both the actor and the director themselves to verify it before fans believe it to be true. When news spread across Twitter that Ben Affleck was set to be the next Batman, fans everywhere thought it was wild gossip. When we wondered if Cumberbatch really was Kahn in the new *Star Trek* film, hardcore fans refused to believe it. Even when Heath Ledger was cast as the new Joker, too many fans scoffed

X-Men and I believed it.

So what's the solution? Nothing. Arguing and speculating about who should be the next Time Lord or Jedi Master or masked crusader is what we do as fans. We love to go online and debate which actors and actresses have deserved our respect and adoration enough to play our beloved heroes and villains. That's what makes fandom thrive, the endless conversations and arguments, the ongoing rants and raves, and that one glorious rumour that we hope one day becomes reality. Ya know, like Eva Green being the next Wonder Woman. **SFX**

Bonnie still cannot believe that Vince Vaughn was cast as Norman Bates.



Our columnist Bonnie Burton, a San Francisco-based author, has written a number of books including her latest – *The Star Wars Craft Book*.
Bonnie appears on the massive "Geek & Sundry" and "Stan Lee's World Of Heroes" YouTube channels.
More of her writing can be found at Grrl.com.

Why double-check when you can get hits from a sensational headline?

at the idea, until they later ate their words after a jaw-dropping performance from the late actor.

I've been pleasantly surprised by wild casting choices. Samuel L Jackson made one hell of a badass Jedi Master in the *Star Wars* prequels. Tilda Swinton as the archangel in *Constantine* made me wonder if all angels have a creepy hidden agenda. And Kelsey Grammer went from posh psychiatrist in *Cheers* and *Frasier* to the Beast in the

MOTHER'S BASEMENT



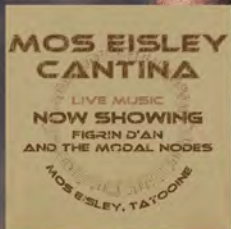
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YOUR SFX



THIS MONTH'S
LETTERS
COMPILED BY

**Richard
Edwards,
Deputy Editor**

► In a month when Ben Affleck's casting as Batman dominated the news, I'm proud to say that *SFX* readers are giving him the benefit of the doubt much more than the internet at large. In fact, you're more concerned about what Zack Snyder has planned for his Batty Super sequel...

WRITE IN AND WIN!

Writing to *SFX* is good for you. Not only are you preserving the long lost art of letter writing (emails count, you know), you could see your name and

words from your brain on these very pages. And for one lucky person it means swelling your book collection to the tune of novels from the superbeings at the Black Library. This month's monarch of the missives (aka Star Letter writer) will receive **Horus Heresy: Vulkan**

Lives by Nick Kyme, **Pariah** by Dan Abnett and **Bane Of Malekith** by William King. Beam your message our way and you too could sit on the throne.



HOT TOPIC! BEN AFFLECK AS BATMAN

I guess I stood alongside many Bat fans with a slight sense of bewilderment when the name Ben Affleck trickled through the internet. There's plenty of reasons why I was shocked, not least because the actor himself had publicly admitted he wanted nothing to do with costumed heroes after the misfiring *Daredevil* movie.

But let's not convince ourselves that Christian Bale is the reason we loved the Nolan *Dark Knight* movies so much. He filled the role well enough, but was he so memorable that they wouldn't have been great movies regardless?

Pete "Tameblue" Gillespie, email

Predictably, the internet hates this casting decision, with the main reason being Affleck's other superhero role in 2003's *Daredevil*. While that film was far from perfect, it was released 10 years ago, and believe it or not, an actor's performance can change over a period of time. So yes, we may have the star of *Gigli* and *Pearl Harbor* becoming the new Batman, but could you believe that Mr Mom or Patrick Bateman would take up the same role and give such brilliant performances?

James Rodrigues, Trowbridge

► Or that *ER*'s Dr Doug Ross would be so hopeless as both Batman and Bruce Wayne?

Am I the only person in the multiverse to actually quite enjoy *Daredevil*? Especially the "Director's Cut" with Coolio. Okay, it was a bit of a mess in places, and Colin Farrell was miscast, but I thought Ben Affleck made a decent fist of the role, and, c'mon, that dimple! It's made for a Batman mask!

Post Apocalypse

Contact us:

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- Facebook [Facebook.com/SFXmagazine](https://www.facebook.com/SFXmagazine)
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GOOD KNIGHT?

Ben Affleck is an actor who's been in some poor films, and was poor in them. However, the opposite is also true. He's older and more experienced than he was on *Daredevil* (a film I still think isn't as bad as it's made out to be), and could be a good fit to play a Frank Miller-esque version of Bats.

It would be nice if fans grew the hell up and stopped prejudging every casting decision based on nothing more than someone's name. Michael Keaton and Heath Ledger were roundly ridiculed before their casting in Batman movies, as were Catherine Tate in *Doctor Who* and Daniel Craig as Bond. Each occasion the actor does an amazing job and makes the protesters look like fools. You'd think by now that people would wait until they see the performance before voicing their opinion.

Rob Allen, email

► Spot on, sir! Comic book movies get casting right way more than they get it wrong. Look at it this way, the Superman/Batman movie is so big that Zack Snyder and co could have had anyone they wanted, so it's safe to say they saw something special in Affleck.

*Steve Gardiner,
Newcastle Upon Tyne*

► I agree that *Daredevil* is unfairly maligned – there's some pretty decent moments in there, and it was unlucky to come out before Hollywood had properly sussed out how to make superhero movies.

This is actually not a hot topic at all! Ever since there have been movies made of books there have been fans of those books who have cried out in rage that the director got it all wrong and the actors were wrong/sucked. A movie can never be anything but one translation from one medium to another. This ➔



But can there ever really be another Adam West?

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YOUR SFX CONTENTS

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ask the SFXperts

If you can't remember it, we can! Your sci-fi problems solved...

GRABBED BY THE GHOULIES

I've got a vague memory of a film that featured a fella driving in the country and driving into a village. All seemed fine until he learns that they are either dead or vampires. He escapes to his car and drives away, but no matter which way he goes he always returns to this village.

Russ Cooper, email

GUEST SFXPERT

GEORGE WHITE SAYS:

This is almost certainly the final segment of the 1981 Vincent Price anthology movie *The Monster Club*. It stars Hollywood cowboy Stuart Whitman as a director who, while scouting locations, finds himself in the oddly primitive village of Loughville, headed by the inimitable Patrick Magee. Whitman falls in with a young Lesley Dunlop as Magee's daughter, and learns she is a Humungoo, with a human mother and ghoul father (hence lough – anagram of ghoul). Eventually Whitman leaves, but is captured by a police car driven by ghouls.

READ RUUM

I'm looking for a book about an alien drone accidentally left behind on Earth after a research ship leaves. It wanders around what seems to be a temperate forest. One incident involves running into a bear, which tries to fight the drone.

Neal Harris, email

DAVID LANGFORD SAYS:

Possibly "The Ruum" by Arthur Porges, first published in October 1953 in *The Magazine Of Fantasy And Science Fiction*. The drone, or "ruum", is a biological sample-taker that catches and paralyzes animals for future study by its departed masters. When the hero encounters this thing in the wild, there's a long epic chase – increasingly exhausted human versus tireless, implacable machine – leading to a surprise ending.



ANIMAL HOUSE

I remember watching a strange adult cartoon in the early 2000s. I think it was on Channel 4 and it was about a group of genetically altered animals who are freed by activists and struggle to adapt to life on the outside. When they eventually return to the lab they find they have been replaced by a similar group with one major difference – they have hands.

Rachel MacRae, Scotland

JORDAN FARLEY SAYS:

This is the bizarre *I Am Not An Animal*, which aired on BBC Two back in 2004. Steve Coogan and Simon Pegg were among the stars who provided voices for a family of talking animals born and raised in Vivi-Sec laboratory, only to be busted out by a group of militant animal activists. It was part satire, as the pampered animals struggle with the realities of modern life but mostly a bit weird, even the animation, which had a *South Park* meets *Fonejacker* quality. The title was taken from a famous *Elephant Man* quote, and it ran for just six episodes. The complete series was released on DVD in 2005, but seems to be out of print at present, with second-hand copies going for around £20.



Defiance: full of aliens and those who use high-factor sun creams.

means that some fans of the source material will like it and some will be disappointed.

Marc van der Geer, Toulouse, France

I was disappointed with Ben Affleck taking the role as Batman not because I think he'll be bad at it (I think he'll probably be much better than Christian Bale), but because after *Gone Baby Gone*, *The Town*, and especially *Argo*, I am far more interested in seeing Affleck direct another great movie than star in one of Zack Snyder's tedious slugfests.

Brandon Medley, Norman Park, GA

My only real disappointment is that they went with an A-list actor rather than an unusual choice like the excellent Henry Cavill. Nevertheless I think he'll do a fine job, and hopefully this'll mean Affleck will be first in line to direct the next standalone Batman movie.

Chris Capel, email

Who knows? Maybe the chance to direct the next Batman movie is part of Affleck's deal. I'm sure he'd make a great film.

Everyone keeps going on about whether Ben Affleck can play Batman – of this I have no doubt

and his chin proves it – but surely the real question is can he play Bruce Wayne?

Rich Lee, Wigan

If I wanted a really good opinion of Ben Affleck as the Caped Crusader I would interview the people Mr Affleck grew up with, especially kids that played with him when he was eight years old. I dare say these people would be the only ones who have ever seen him play Batman. The rest of us should wait to see the damn movie before judging it.

Henrik Hansen, Sydenham

People need to stop hating on the Affleck, as no one knows what he will bring to Batman. He's a more accomplished actor than people give him credit for. Did anyone see *Argo*? I'm more worried having seen *Man Of Steel* that I'll walk out of the cinema dizzy. Mr Snyder – I love my action but I still need to be able to follow it.

John Smith, email

Affleck will be fine. I'm more worried about script and direction. The last act of *Man Of Steel* was appalling in its lack of humanity and sense of consequence. Please find a new scriptwriter.

K Lee, email

Send us questions at sfxperts@futurenet.co.uk. Want to be a guest SFXpert? Head to www.sfx.co.uk/SFXperts to see a list of unanswered questions.



► With David Goyer one of the hottest scriptwriting properties in Hollywood, I doubt he's going anywhere. But there's no need to panic, even if you hated *Man Of Steel* – don't forget that Goyer was also a major player in the *Dark Knight* trilogy.

DOCTOR BRUCE WAYNE, 007

I for one must say that I'm really quite satisfied with the decision to cast Peter Capaldi as the next Batman. I know that it's not a choice that will appeal directly to the teen audience, but the moment that he walks into that office in Whitehall and starts flirting with Miss Money Penny I'm certain that everyone will be won over.

The Llama God, The Dark and Slightly-Crossed Ford of the Chandlers

► And maybe Ben Affleck could be the next next Doctor?

THE FINAL FRONTIER

I am rewatching *Stargate Atlantis* at the moment and am really enjoying it. But where are the current action adventure SF shows? It seems it's all angst-ridden teen vampires or werewolves! I want some space-set entertainment that is just escapist fun! Please can we have something like *Stargate* back. I've read that a new version of *Space: 1999* is being planned. I hope so! I live in hope for starships, phasers and fun!

Darren Turner, email

► *Defiance* may be set on Earth, but with all those alien species, it's a step in the right direction towards a full-blown spaceship show. And with *Star Trek*

"I'm not being known as the Just Moderately Okay Spider-Man!"



"Come on Sony, how about *Astonishing, Spectacular*, or maybe *Web Of* as the title"

rebooted, plus *Guardians Of The Galaxy* and *Star Wars Episode VII* on the way, space opera is back in fashion at the cinema – fingers crossed, where the big screen goes the small screen usually follows.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

I'm starting the campaign here for the next *Spider-Man* film to be called something more imaginative than *Amazing Spider-Man 2*. Come on Sony, how about *Astonishing, Spectacular*, or maybe *Web Of*. Surely they can do better than adding a 2. And while I'm on the

subject, Marvel Studios, how about *Invincible Iron Man* next time out?

Mark Howe, Exeter

► *Amazing Spider-Man*, perhaps? Or how about *The Ordinary Peter Parker*?

TWELFTH NIGHT

After reading comments and opinions on the casting of Peter Capaldi as the new Doctor, I have come to the conclusion there are actually people out there who believe the show was created in 2005 by Russell T Davies. Fans who have only recently discovered the show are up in arms, because they want a "young, good looking, hip actor" to play the character. These fans don't understand that throughout the years, the Doctor hasn't always been youthful and, apart from Peter Davison, was traditionally played by a middle-aged or older actor.

If anything, the BBC and Steven Moffat should be applauded for ➔

THIS MONTH IN SCI-FI HISTORY

SFX 177
Christmas
2008



5 YEARS
AGO

We go behind the scenes with *Watchmen* and look back at the classic Richard Donner *Superman* movie.

SFX 112
Christmas
2003



10 YEARS
AGO

We chat with the boys from Royston Vasey and prepare for the gigantic finale of *The Lord Of The Rings*.

SFX 46
Christmas
1998



15 YEARS
AGO

Ewan McGregor talks *Star Wars* and Hollywood, while *SFX* goes *Who* mad with the one and only Tom Baker.

VIDEOLINK The best of YouTube and beyond



Breaking Trek

<http://bit.ly/BreakingTrek>

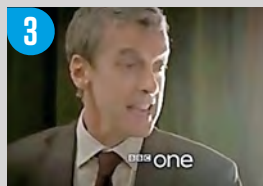
► Love the drug-fuelled rants of *Breaking Bad*'s Badger? This video combines his brilliantly bizarre pitch for an episode of *Star Trek* with a lovely bit of flash animation – a glimpse into the episode that never will be!



8-Bit Blade Runner

<http://bit.ly/8BitBlade>

► With 8-bit consoles gathering dust across the country, YouTube is your first port of call for a nostalgia hit. This fab 8-bit *Blade Runner* animation compresses all 117 minutes into little over two ace minutes.



Malcolm Tucker IS Dr Who

<http://bit.ly/TuckerWho>

► This hilarious mash up of *The Thick Of It* and *Doctor Who* shows us just how that would look. Warning: very strong language from Mr Capaldi!



Asgard Development

<http://bit.ly/Thoredsted>

► What's the difference between *Arrested Development* and *Thor*? Quite a lot. But this short highlights the wayward relationship between brothers in both. Funny even if you don't worship at Bluth's temple.



I'm "insert name here"

<http://bit.ly/ImInsertName>

► You know the moment when superheroes introduce themselves? Screen Junkies has taken that moment from 36 different movies, and popped it into one handy compilation video. Neat.



SOAPBOX SFX WRITERS' PERSONAL RANTS

Production Editor **Russell Lewin** says beware the new puritans



They're called breasts, Mama, every woman has them," Carrie White tells her fundamentalist mother in Brian De Palma's *Carrie*.

Not according to some. Recently I've noticed increased criticism of the depictions of the female form in different SF outlets (comics, videogames, films etc). A few examples: some *Star Trek* fans said they weren't happy at seeing Alice Eve in her underwear in *Into Darkness*. Simon Pegg suffered a noisy assault on Twitter when he said he liked some Princess Leia look-alikes. Comics reviewers often criticise artists for drawing women with large breasts (while sometimes forgetting that the way men are drawn – all pecs and six-packs – is hardly realistic either). And as comic books artists like Ramona Fradon demonstrate, women can draw other women as curvy and sexy. There's nothing wrong with that.

Women are slated for showing off their bodies. Yet what about all the female cosplayers who willingly flash the flesh at various conventions and cons? They're certainly not being forced to act like this, they enjoy it.

Being censorious is prudish and illiberal. A sexually liberal future is the one to aim for, and

all women should be free to choose to do as they please.

People have to exploit their particular talent, which could be having a fine singing voice or being good at sums – or showing their body off. Who is it to judge that one profession is necessarily less worthy than another?

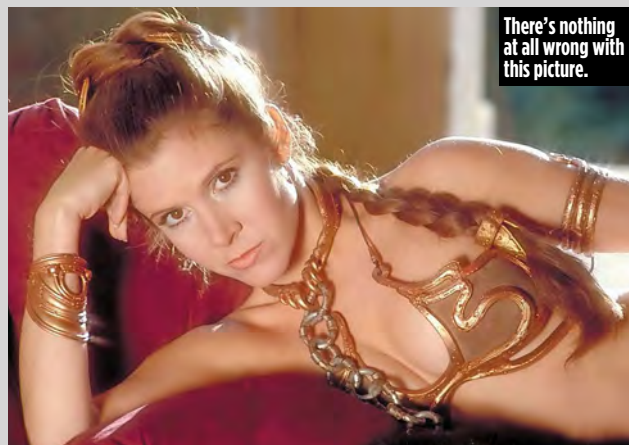
Jealousy comes into it, but it's more than that. As porn has become widely available thanks to the internet perhaps folk have had their appetite satiated and don't require flesh in the mainstream? At the same time

"A sexually liberal future is the one to aim for"

the new hypocritical puritans peddle their repressed views on sex, couching it in impregnable "I'm so offended" terms. We've created a generation of bedroom Mary Whitehouses.

Stuffy, prudish Britishness is encrusted with misguided Guardianista illiberal liberalism. Scratch a liberal, reveal a dictator.

We're almost in danger of returning to the Victorian era and covering up piano legs. Let's not, eh?



giving an older actor arguably the biggest acting job in British television and it will be a welcome change from the gentle flirting of the younger recent Doctors. It could also be said that one of the strengths of the Tennant/Smith Doctors was the way they were older, wiser personalities in a youthful body – now we could get the reverse, with the older Capaldi potentially having an almost childish enthusiasm for all life, much like the Doctors of old.

John Morgan, Tamworth

I'm still surprised that the BBC allowed Moffat and co to cast an older actor (BBC America's marketing department must be having kittens), but equally delighted and excited. Capaldi will be brilliant because, well, he's brilliant in everything.



PREQUEL OPPORTUNITIES

With the *Hannibal* and *Bates Motel* prequel TV series doing well and new shows based on *The Exorcist* and *Rosemary's Baby* to come, what other genre movies could make good TV shows? *Aliens*, maybe? A TV series set in the *Alien* universe could work with a marine unit fighting the monsters. Or a Freddy Krueger prequel series showing how he was caught, then killed, by an angry mob of parents?

Robert Graham, Lincoln

Or here's a really crazy idea – maybe we could get a few series based on new and original ideas? Surely that would be more interesting than telling backstories that are best left untold. I can't be the only one getting bored of prequels? SFX

WAHF

WE ALSO HEARD FROM

● **John Vaughan** ("If I was Warner Bros or a DC comics fan, I would be more worried about actually producing a DC universe movie that was actually good rather than Affleck being Batman"); ● **Paul Robinson** ("If I think of Ben Affleck, standing nose-to-nose with Henry Cavill and calling him a boy scout? Then I see it perfectly"); ● **Keith Tudor** (pleased to see that *Agents Of SHIELD*'s arriving on Channel 4 so soon after US broadcast – we're with you on that one, Keith!); ● **Teri Strutt** (on our Ian's *Star Trek Into Darkness* review "I'm not sure Ian knows what a vajazzle is. By definition it is not something that can be done to one's forehead"); ● **The Llama God** ("*Kick-Ass 2* manages to spectacularly miss the point of the original film. It's got all the crudity, the swearing and the violence, but it has none of the heart"); ● **Lauren** ("Who would win in a battle between Cyclops and Wolverine?" We say Wolverine. Sooner or later Cyclops is going to slip up and give Logan a chance to unleash some fatal snikting); ● **David Clarke** (asked to take his grill and plant pots off his balcony because of *Transformers 4* filming); ● **Paul Vought** (whose little boy watched "The Curse Of Fatal Death" and didn't like the idea of the Doctor being "a Mummy" when the Time Lord became Joanna Lumley); ● **Ilona Kosmowsky** (a *Teen Wolf* fan unhappy about the show being dropped by Sky Living and hoping that season three will make it to DVD in the UK); ● **Tobias Nicholls** (who's noticed that with Messrs Hemsworth, Evans and Pratt in lead roles, Marvel clearly has a thing for the name Chris: "I've got a tenner on Chris Pine for Ant-Man"); ● **Neil Hartman** ("I find I cannot stop saying Peter Capaldi's name without the 'Have a banana' tune spinning in my head"); and many, many more...



SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS WITH THE SCI-FI WORLD!

Write in and you'll win some books if we feature you in the star letter slot. Email us at sfx@futurenet.com or you can try Post Apocalypse, SFX, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW if you're not taken with technology.

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Wishlist

Illustrating what you want to see in new SF films and TV. This month: we look forward to Peter Capaldi's first adventure...

The Twelfth Doctor

YOUR TOP 5 REQUESTS

The Costume

1 When it comes to the Doctor, the suit is almost as important as the man in it. "Hartnell-esque with a cape, no hat, ornate Sonic, Victorian shirt, optional tie," suggests **Gerry Hessian**. While **Simon Keith Bromley** says: "Grow back the Musketeers' 'tache and beard, lace-up collarless shirt, waistcoat, brightly coloured trousers. That's a winning outfit."

The TARDIS

2 It's only recently had a redesign, which is why many of you agreed that the TARDIS should stay as is, but not everyone did. "I'd like to see a completely gothic interior and the centre piston should be MASSIVE!" says **John Hobart**.

The Companion

3 Jenna Coleman (RIP "Louise") will be sticking around as Clara Oswald for the time being, but you're already looking to the future. "A non-human companion, not just 'Doctor meets girl on Earth takes her on adventures'. And on that subject, more alien planets!" says **Hannah Davis**.

The Monsters

4 As well as the usual suspects, Davros, the Quarks and the Drashigs got a mention. **Alex Jones** came up with our favourite suggestion. "I want to see the Kandyman, simply because if Capaldi's Doctor should have a Malcolm Tucker-style outburst at any monster it should be him."

The Series

5 Easily the most common request: a full 13-episode series for 2014. "Hopefully Peter Capaldi will get a proper run of episodes to establish his take on the character," says **Stephen Candy**.



JENNA COLEMAN
AS CLARA

WARWICK DAVIS
AS A QUARK



ANDY SERKIS
AS A DRASHIG

PETER CAPALDI
AS THE DOCTOR

DOUG JONES
AS THE KANDYMAN

ARE YOU LISTENING?

We pay for you,
so listen up, BBC!

- ▶ More mature storylines and more in-jokes concerning the previous 11 Doctors. **Ian Holland**
- ▶ More Neil Gaiman, less Neil Cross. **Craig Oxbrow**
- ▶ An immediate end to pretend deaths, they're overdone and they're manipulative. Also, more Strax, particularly when he fights Glaswegians. **John Conway**
- ▶ I'd just like Moffat to stop re-writing "The Curse Of Fatal Death". I didn't find it funny the first time round, let alone the eighth or ninth... **Miles Hammer**
- ▶ Proper scripts with a beginning, middle and end that make narrative sense. **James Skinner**
- ▶ More multi-episode stories, less episodes that rush through the last 10 minutes of story in order to fit it in. **Kate Leatherbarrow**
- ▶ No romantic entanglements, with companions or otherwise. A return to a darker and vaguely sinister Doctor. **Tim McNulty**
- ▶ Daleks! Also high time the Master came back, preferably as John Simm. **James Ormiston**
- ▶ The return of the Yeti and less dependence on the Sonic. **Andy Ebookwyr Angel**
- ▶ Less Weeping Angels, more Daleks! **Matthew Howard**
- ▶ More new alien races. Give the Daleks and Cybermen a rest. **Kevin Hall**
- ▶ Less moon-eyed companions, more mature storylines, more River being awesome. Oh and bring back Jack. **Anna-Lena Dubé Fuller**
- ▶ A real companion death, either through the Doctor's neglect or a sacrifice for the greater good. No timey wimey get-out clauses. **Michael Sparks**
- ▶ A season of 13 uninterrupted episodes and a Christmas special over the course of one year. **Richard Thomas**
- ▶ Clara in Romana's Victorian swimming costume from "The Leisure Hive". Would be so classy. **Keith Norton**
- ▶ A male companion? A female and male non-romantic duo? How about even an alien? **Michael Lupton**

coming soon

Riddick 4 and True Blood

We still want to know what you'd like to see if/when Vin Diesel's shiny-eyed killer returns to screens and suggestions at the ready for *True Blood*'s seventh and final season.



Send in your ideas about our current Wishlist by visiting bit.ly/SFXwishlist



Event Horizon

Because meeting up is every fan's right



The best dressed SF fans in the universe? Although a little brown.

CON REPORT

Weekend At The Asylum

13-15 September, Lincoln's Historic Quarter

For one weekend a year, the quiet city of Lincoln is politely awakened by the presence of 1,000 Steampunks. **Cecily Mumby** finds out more

A MAN IN CEREMONIAL Victorian dress runs past, urgently clutching a decorative brass blunderbuss and stopping only to allow the odd confused local the chance to take his photo... this was just the start of a wonderfully eccentric weekend.

This year Weekend At The Asylum staged events ranging from table top RPGs and "Tea Duelling" in the day, to a Sophisticated Soirée and a decadent burlesque show that lasted late into the night. Aside from this, there was a celebration of the Steampunk aesthetic in the form of a fashion show, never ending photo opportunities and a clothing, accessories and curios market. A lot of the events took place inside Lincoln's historic castle and the surrounding streets, which made a beautiful backdrop for this already photogenic weekend.

What really struck me about the event was how well humoured and inclusive it was.

Many of the participants invested loads of time and effort into their outfits and looked utterly spectacular in Victorian-inspired dress or amazingly intricate robotic costumes. The friendly and welcoming atmosphere made it an event worth visiting even for people who aren't into Steampunk in a big way. When asked, the majority of attendees welcomed having their photograph taken from curious members of the public and seemed flattered by the attention that other Steampunks and the public gave them.

It's only been running for a few years now, but this Steampunk centred weekend has grown and developed into something really special and surprising. It's easy to see how Weekend At The Asylum has become Europe's largest Steampunk festival, as this relaxed event is great fun for dedicated Steampunks and newcomers alike.

<http://steampunk.synthasite.com/>

CON REPORT

Melksham Comic Con 2013

31 August 2013, Melksham Assembly Hall

David Cromarty reports from a kickstarted con in the most unlikely of locations

WE CAN'T HELP WONDERING if the Melksham Comic Con team doesn't have a Time Lord among their number, given everything they managed to squeeze into the town's less than spacious Assembly Hall. With more than a thousand people passing through the doors, it's to the organisers' credit there were no issues with overcrowding or excessively long queues.

The quality of guests didn't disappoint, with popular writers Kieron Gillen and Simon Spurrier giving entertaining and insightful talks. The highlight of the panels was the launch of *The Heavenly Chord*, the first collaboration between independent comic creators Jon Lock and Nich Angell, who spoke in detail about what brought them together. Their wit and obvious love for the medium was typical of the convention's spirit.

Anyone wanting to follow in the footsteps of these creators could talk to publishers or get their portfolios reviewed by The Comic Book Alliance in the main hall, which also housed a wide variety of retailers and creators to tempt attendees into spending their hard-earned cash.

There was also plenty to entertain the next generation of comic readers, including face painting and some of the most impressive balloon creations you're likely to find, including a balloon Joker!

Everyone present seemed to have a wonderful time, as demonstrated by the cheer that erupted when the organisers announced that next year's event would expand to fill two days. On the strength of this year's convention, it's not to be missed.

<http://www.melkshamcomiccon.co.uk>





LEGO REPORT

Lego Star Wars Miniland Model Display

Legoland Windsor Resort

Steven Ellis embraces his inner child and tours Legoland's new *Star Wars* exhibit

LEGO HAS MADE MANY DEALS TO CREATE CHARACTERS and sets from sci-fi series over the years. Arguably the best fit has been *Star Wars* and Legoland Windsor has been celebrating this partnership. Last year they started their Miniland exhibit, which features iconic scenes from six of the *Star Wars* films, made out of 1.5 million Lego bricks. This year they've expanded to feature 12 fan favourite characters from the *Star Wars* franchise built as three foot tall figures.

Splendid dioramas were on show; with a huge Millennium Falcon and a Hoth battle scene that took up an entire room, resisting the urge to leap over the guard rail and start playing proved difficult. The new scaled up versions of character mini-figures for 2013 were equally impressive.

You can only see the exhibit as part of the whole Legoland Windsor experience, but if you have kids then the park offers a great day out for the whole family. <http://bit.ly/SFXLegoland>

DON'T MISS IT!

Thought Bubble 17-24 November, Leeds

Abby Leachman looks ahead to one of the UK's biggest comic and arts festivals

FOR SIX YEARS LEEDS HAS PLAYED HOST TO ONE OF the largest annual events of its kind in the UK, celebrating graphic art in its myriad forms. With activities spanning eight days, followed by a huge two-day convention, Thought Bubble cheerily welcomes all.

Now in its seventh year, the event hopes to dazzle the world of comics and animation once again with its "bigger than ever" display of writers and artists, with film screenings, competitions, animations, portfolio viewings, classes and of course, a massive cosplay parade taking part in the events. Geoff Darrow, Kelly Sue DeConnick, Matt Fraction and Fiona Staples are among the many guests from around the world that will be appearing during the festivities.

Taking place at several different venues and locations around the city, Thought Bubble is a non-profit organisation that looks to promote sequential art as an important part of the genre. With more than 3,000 people attending last year's event, many more are expected to arrive in 2013. Tickets are available now. <http://thoughtbubblefestival.com/>

28 Days Later

As the Sun disappears, console yourself with sci-fi

16 OCTOBER – 12 NOVEMBER

Staying In

- **Mondays** – *True Blood* is on Fox, and *Arrow* is on Sky1 from 21 October.
- **Tuesdays** – *American Horror Story: Coven* is on Fox from 29 October. *Vampire Diaries* spin-off *The Originals* is on Syfy from 22 October.
- **Wednesdays** – *Sleepy Hollow* hits the Universal Channel.
- **Thursdays** – *Haven's* on Syfy; *Dracula* is on Sky Living from late October.
- **Fridays** – Bonanza: *The Walking Dead* (Fox), *Marvel's Agents Of SHIELD* (Channel 4) and *Orphan Black* (BBC Three) hit screens.
- **Saturdays** – Is *Atlantis* the new *Merlin* yet? Find out on BBC One.

Going Out

- **24-27 October** – Expect a mix of classic and brand new horror film screenings at this year's **Bram Stoker Film Festival**. <http://www.bramstokerfilmfestival.com/>
- **25-27 October** – Alexis Denisof, Amy Acker, Jane Espenson and Tom Lenk guest at **Hallowhedon 5**. <http://bit.ly/SFXHallowhedon5>
- **26 October** – **Bristolcon 2013** celebrates some of its favourite sci-fi and fantasy authors. *SFX*'ll be there too! <http://www.bristolcon.org/>
- **31 October–3 November** – Joe Hill is among the many great authors at the **World Fantasy Convention** in Brighton. <http://wfc2013.org/>
- **1-3 November** – *Lucifer* actor Mark Pellegrino is one of the guests at the 11th unofficial *Supernatural* con, **Asylum**. <http://bit.ly/SFXAsylum11>
- **2-3 November** – The **Black Library Weekender** returns to Nottingham for its second year. <http://bit.ly/SFXBlackLibrary11>
- **1-4 November** – Fan of Terry Pratchett's work? The **Irish Discworld Con** welcomes you to a series of panels, games and banquets. <http://idwcon.org/>

At The Pictures

- **25 October** – A brainy kid is trained to save the world in *Ender's Game*, and the weather's still tasty in *Cloudy With A Chance Of Meatballs 2*.
- **30 October** – The Thunder God returns in *Thor: The Dark World*.
- **31 October** – Just in time for Halloween, it's *The Haunting In Connecticut 2*.
- **8 November** – It's a bad day to be in orbit in the excellent *Gravity*.

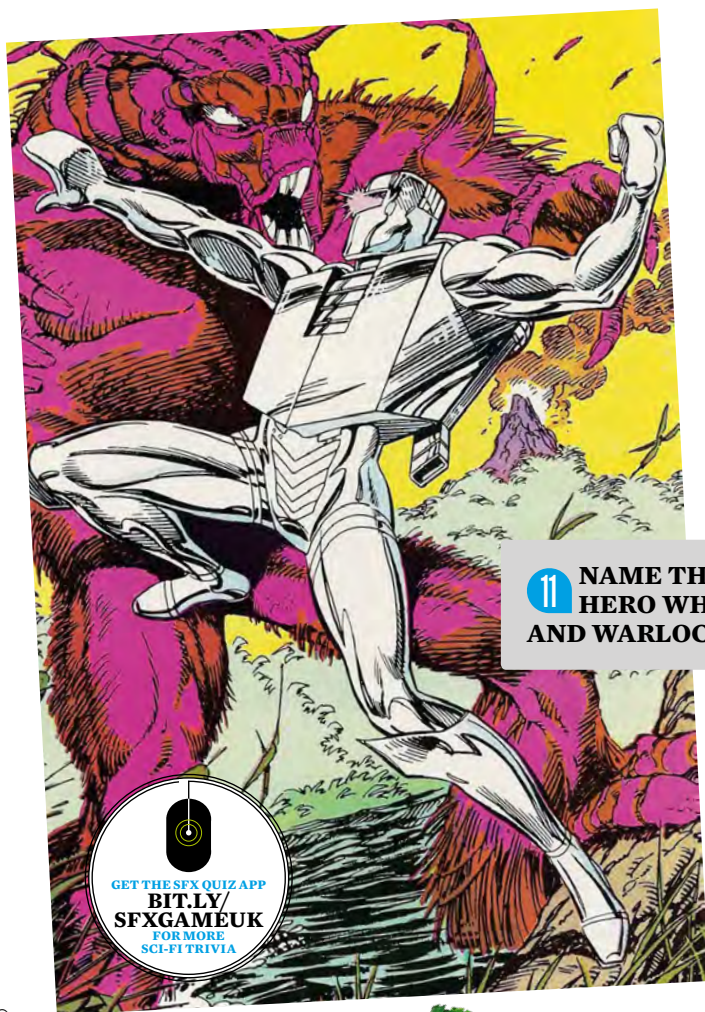


Blastermind

Time for *SFX*'s token Welshman to fly the red dragon and test your knowledge of that strange and magical land beyond the Severn Bridge...



- 1 Which member of the original *Star Trek* cast can claim Welsh ancestry?
- 2 Alan Garner's novel *The Owl Service* was inspired by which collection of Welsh folk tales?
- 3 Which debonair hero encountered giant ants in Wales in the episode "The House On Dragon's Rock"?
- 4 Richard Burton narrates Jeff Wayne's *Musical Version Of War Of The Worlds*. What are the first five words we hear?



11 NAME THIS ROBOTIC MARVEL HERO WHO FOUGHT WITCHES AND WARLOCKS IN DARKEST WALES.



15 NAME THIS '90s CHILDREN'S TV DRAMA WRITTEN BY RUSSELL T DAVIES.

- 5 What's the name of the Welsh village in *Doctor Who* tale "The Green Death"?
- 6 Which Welshman has played a Marvel superhero?
- 7 Creator of the Daleks Terry Nation was born in which Welsh city?
- 8 A full-scale model of which iconic spaceship was built in Pembroke Dock in 1979?
- 9 Which Welsh superhero debuted in the pages of *The Sentry* in 2000?
- 10 Which Welsh actress played the Reverend Mother in David Lynch's *Dune*?

- 16 *Torchwood* was based in which part of Cardiff Bay?
- 17 Cardiff-born Richard Marquand directed *Return Of The Jedi*. What were his other contributions to that film?
- 18 Which Bond villain was played by a Welshman?
- 19 What connects Haverfordwest and Gotham City?

20 NAME THIS SWANSEA BORN CHARACTER ACTOR, STAR OF THE ORIGINAL SURVIVORS.



ANSWERS 1 Nichelle Nichols 2 The Mabinogion 3 The Saint 4 "No one would have believed" 5 Llanfairfach 6 Ioan Gruffudd 7 Cardiff 8 The Millennium Falcon 9 The Red Dragon 10 Sian Phillips 11 ROM 12 Captain Cymru 13 Alastair Reynolds 14 Prince Barn 15 Century Falls 16 Roald Dahl Pass 17 He voiced a droid in Jabba's palace and was an AT-ST pilot 18 Elliot Carver in *Tomorrow Never Dies* (Jonathan Pryce) 19 Birthplace of Christian Bale 20 Talfryn Thomas

- 12 Who is Captain Britain's Welsh equivalent in the Marvel universe?
- 13 Which Barry-born SF author is a former research astronomer with the European Space Agency?
- 14 Timothy Dalton was born in Colwyn Bay. Name his character in *Flash Gordon*.

HOW DID YOU DO?
Cymru cliché or top Taffy icon?

0-5 Leek

6-10 Lovespoon

11-15 Rugby ball

16-19 Ivor the Engine

20 Welsh dragon

The World Of SFX

There are so many ways to be part of our community



THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO SUPERHEROES

► SFX's latest bookazine is a massive celebration of superhero sizzlers! It's on sale now for three months; look out for this one-off 164-page glossy guide to all your favourite caped crime-fighters. We feature both forthcoming blockbusters and the best (and worst!) of superhero yarns of yesteryear. Film is our main focus, but we also look at TV and comics. There's our latest extensive readers' poll choosing the greatest superhero films of all time, and a gaze back at the glory days of 1970s superhero TV. Plus, we put fans' questions to the living legend that is Stan Lee!

COMIC HEROES

► From Friday 18 October, *Comic Heroes* 21 hits shelves boasting a new look and new format! Forget what you know about our sister title – from now on it's a packed 164-page glossy bookazine format containing features, interviews, comic strips and more. Meanwhile, if you're not familiar with *Comic Heroes*, there's still time to catch up with *Comic Heroes Presents: Superheroes!* It's a jumbo collection of the best interviews and features from the CH archives. www.comicheroesmagazine.com



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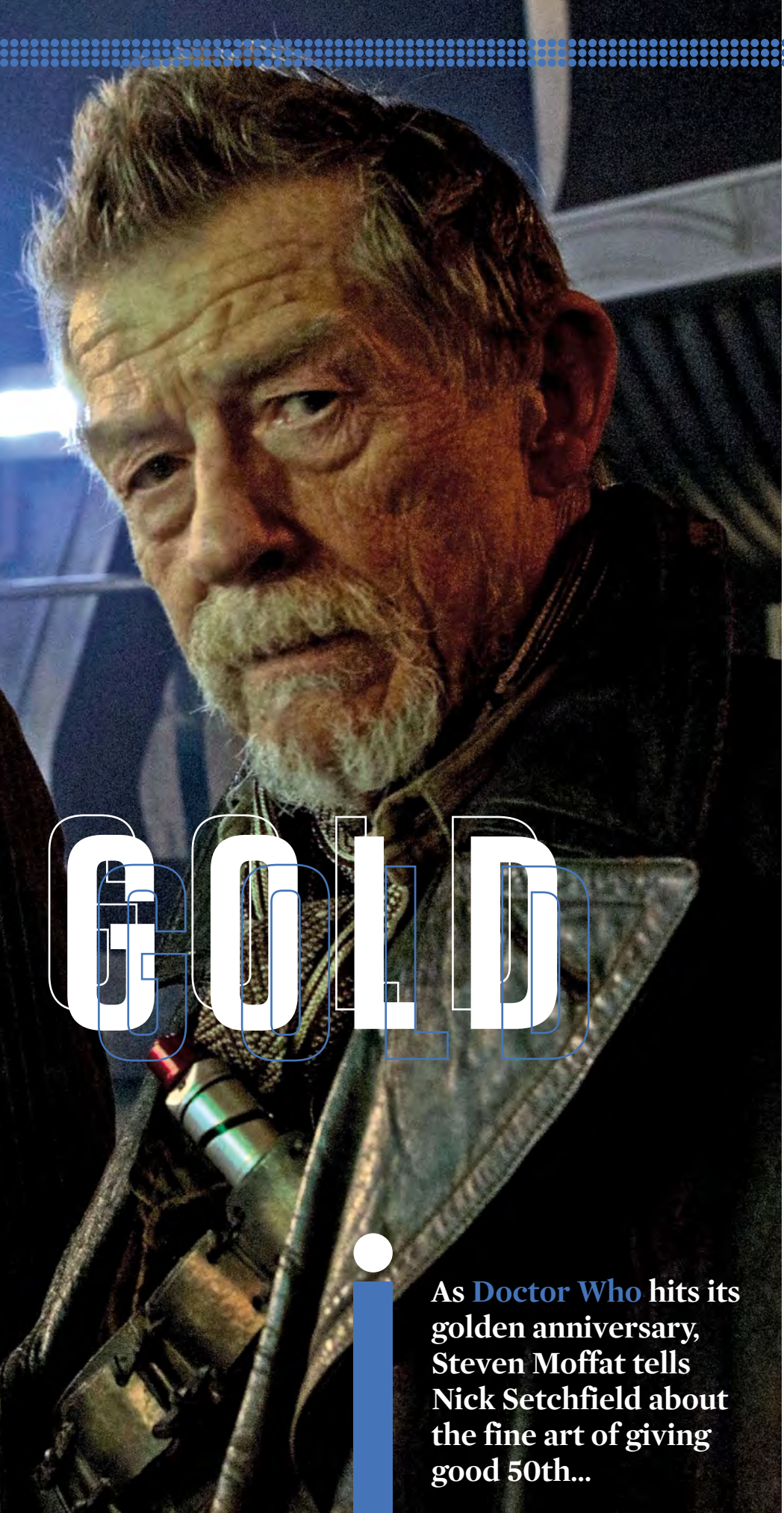
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"I'd rather have youth on my side than an Auton"



GOING FOR



As **Doctor Who** hits its golden anniversary, Steven Moffat tells Nick Setchfield about the fine art of giving good 50th...



THERE'S A WEeping ANGEL IN Steven Moffat's garden. Not that he tells you there's a quantum assassin standing sentinel among the shrubbery, hands clasped to its grey and ghastly face. He's too good a storyteller for that. He simply lets your gaze drift and find it, fixing on its nerve-rattling presence with a sudden, instinctive shudder.

"It's not real," he points out. And then, maybe not wishing to sound as though he's reassuring a small child, adds "I mean, it's not from the show. It's a replica. My wife gave it to me as a Christmas present."

Reality and fantasy tend to fuse in Moffat's world. We're in the very living room where Peter Capaldi clandestinely auditioned for the Twelfth Doctor, after all. Unblinking, *SFX* valiantly steadies its tea cup and returns to the reason we're here. It's finally time to talk "The Day Of The Doctor", the insanely anticipated golden anniversary tale toasting five decades of *Doctor Who*.

Expect a pivotal adventure for the Time Lord, one that mashes his tenth and eleventh selves and a new, unsuspected incarnation in the august, time-worn form of John Hurt. "It's the Doctor's day," says Moffat. "It's the turning point moment for him. It's very much about him, and hopefully seeing him in new ways..."

► You've always known the 50th anniversary would happen on your watch. Has it loomed like a big scary thing?

We didn't really spend an awful lot of time thinking about it, because the problems are so immediate on *Doctor Who*. Only towards the end of series seven did I start to think about it. We've got the regeneration to think about right now, which I'm writing, and those things always loom bigger to me than the 50th.

► But the anniversary specials always generate a huge amount of interest...

You mean the one that they did? This is only the second time we've actually done an anniversary special, if you think about it.

► Well, there's "The Three Doctors" and "The Five Doctors"...

"The Three Doctors" wasn't an anniversary special. You've done what every other *Doctor Who* fan, including myself, does. I went back to watch it again and noticed it's not on the anniversary, it's a whole year early! It's '72, and everybody had been saying to them "Get the →

three of them together". And they thought that would be a good season launch. They do it a year early. The only time this has been done before is for the 20th. The 25th sort of happens in the middle of the series. So multi-Doctor stories aren't usually anniversaries and anniversaries aren't usually multi-Doctor stories!

► **Did you have to tune out all the fan expectations for the 50th? Everyone's got their wishlist...**

I don't tune out the expectation with any disdain or dislike. I have many of the same impulses myself! But it depends what level of fan you're talking about, doesn't it? There are the ones who think you are going to hire three actors who are clinically dead. There's nothing I can really do about that. By the time they were planning "The Five Doctors" they had several Doctors kicking around who looked exactly right. It's glorious how much Patrick Troughton and Jon Pertwee resembled their former selves. Not quite, but satisfyingly the same. Tom Baker, had he turned up, would have looked perfect, obviously.

► **Did you get in touch with your inner fan wishlist? And did you have to listen to that voice or ignore it?**

The absolute reality was we didn't have all those Doctors about to come back through the door. There were limitations to who we could get back. They're all brilliant, they're all terrific, but time has passed. I think it would be beyond the dignity of all those very fine actors to want to force themselves back into a costume from 20 or 30 years ago. I was thinking more "What would be a grand old story for the Doctor? And what would speak to the generation who are watching it now, while still celebrating the fact that it's been around for all that time?" Everyone wanted to see David again – that's just a fact. And David and Matt together are glorious. That's a joy.

► **Were you wary of nostalgia?**

Although feeling it, and revelling in it, I was aware that we had many other programmes arranged around the 50th, which would do nostalgia very, very well, possibly better than we could do it in the show itself. We can't think of this as celebrating the last 50 years. It's ensuring the next 50. We've got to set the Doctor off in a brand new direction. It's chapter two of his life. Now something happens to him that changes the way he thinks and the way he will adventure from now on. You can celebrate an anniversary in many ways – I think the most productive one within the narrative is to say "This is where the story really starts. This is where he finds his mission, he finds his destiny." How do you make it a can't-miss episode for everybody? You say "We're not fibbing – this one is going to change the course of the series". And it's very rare in *Doctor Who* that the story happens to the Doctor. It happens to people around him, and he helps out – he's the hero figure who rides in and saves everybody from the

story of the week. He is not the story of the week. In this, he is the story of the week. This is the day of the Doctor. This is his most important day. His most important moment. This is the one he'll remember, whereas I often think the Doctor wanders back to his TARDIS and forgets all about it.

► **How does it feel as a writer to loom above the keyboard, saying "I can change everything in *Doctor Who*! I can create chapter two now!"? Does that feel like a huge responsibility?**

No, because I think I'm naturally cautious about what you're allowed to add and change about the fundamentals of *Doctor Who*. I think on some level you're meant to leave it as you found it, but you can't really do that with a TV series! You don't loom above the keyboard, because that would be arrogant, and arrogant storytelling isn't good – it's more like "What would he be thinking now? What would happen now?" Stephen King puts this much better than I will, as he puts everything much better than I will. He says deciding on the next plot development is like unearthing something – you discover what it was always going to be. You can make anything happen on the page, you can make anything happen next, it's dead easy, but when you know you've got it right you think "Of course! That was what was always going to happen!" This development feels right to me. It will make sense of the Doctor up until now. There's a big statement! It will give him a different perspective, I hope. And there'll also be a lot of running around with monsters and gags!

► **You've got David Tennant back. What was it like the first time you saw Matt and** ➔

MATT SMITH

"I think the scale of it is one of the biggest we've ever done. Having David back, having Billie back, it sprinkles a bit of fairy dust on it, but also things like 3D and a cinema release and all that... it's as big as we've gone in a number of directions."

Whatever you do: don't press that button!

Jenna Coleman's Clara will be joined by Jemma Redgrave as Kate Stewart.





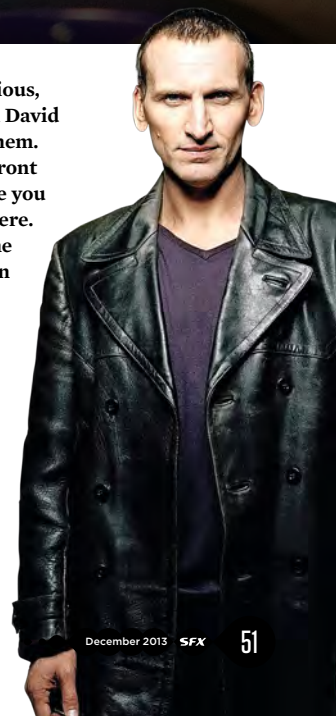
“WOULD IT BE WEIRD IN THE RUN OF THE SERIES TO HAVE THE 45TH DOCTOR TURN UP AND BE PLAYED BY JOHNNY DEPP?”

THE HURT DOCTOR

Who? Steven Moffat talks the Time Lord's mystery incarnation...

I had an initial contact with Chris [Eccleston] and, in a very amiable and gentlemanly way, he didn't feel that he could come back to it. There wasn't any big fuss about it – I had a couple of meetings with him, and he was perfectly pleasant, and indeed quite enthused about the show, but he just doesn't do that, it's just not him. So if you're not just going to do a reunion show – of characters who have never met, which is odd enough – because you can't, what other cool thing could you do? Why not a mayfly Doctor, who exists for one show only? I'd often thought about that. Would it be weird in the run of the series to have the 45th Doctor turn up and be played by Johnny Depp or someone? Would that be a cool thing to do? There was also the idea that if you could bring one classic Doctor back, you'd actually, impossibly, want it to be William Hartnell. You wouldn't want any of the others. You'd want him to come and say “What in the name of god have I turned into?” That's the confrontation that you most want to see, to celebrate 50 years. Going round in circles on it I just thought “What about a Doctor that he never talks about?” And what if it is a Doctor who's done

something terrible, who's much deadlier and more serious, who represents that thing that is the undertow in both David and Matt. You know there's a terrible old man inside them. We all know he's not really carefree or sweet, that's a front he puts on, and in both Matt's and David's performance you can see that very clearly – there's another Doctor in there. Well, here he is, standing there and talking to them. The idea that there was another Doctor would only work, in my view, if the person who turned round was amazing. It's got to be a star, but it's got to be more than that. If Brad Pitt turned around, you'd be really disappointed, because although he's a major star you'd think ‘He's not the Doctor, though, is he?’ But if someone turned round who you always quite hoped or wished would be the Doctor... When it comes to the threeway among the Doctors, he's the one who can do everything. As David and Matt keep saying “We leap around and toss our sonic screwdrivers and bounce off the walls, and then John Hurt flicks his eyes and you know he's got the close-up!” He's walked off with it...



David together in costume?

They're both iconically the Doctor, they are the two faces of the modern show, and there they are, standing next to each other, fully formed and looking exactly right, because David looks exactly as he did when he was the Doctor before. I always found that really quite arresting – there's a picture of Patrick Troughton and Jon Pertwee together, back to back, in "The Three Doctors", which we more or less duplicated for our poster, and you just go "Wow, they're both there." It feels like the forbidden text – but it is just two blokes you know, in costumes! The truth is they hadn't been in the same room very often. They'd only met very infrequently. I don't know if they completely avoided each other in a non-aggressive way – I think they probably just found it slightly odd to be around each other, so they didn't hang out. But they became very great friends making the anniversary. Up until that point they'd barely spoken.

DAVID TENNANT

"I think what really works with this is that the script is very story-led, rather than going "Let's fill it with things that make people go oh, it's a special anniversary lovely birthday thing!" I mean, that's all in there, but what Steven has come up with is a way of moving the story on, and actually changing the Doctor's very journey, and that's in a way not necessarily what you might expect. It could just be a big celebration, but it's a lot more than that."

Welcome back, funny, skinny, clever man!

What's the dynamic between the Doctors? Friction or friendship?

I wrote it as the friction version. When you're talking to yourself there are no limitations, there's no holding back. You wouldn't be kind or courteous. At the same time, because they are two loveable, madcap, caffeinated Doctors, they're also quite fanboyish about each other. They think it's quite cool. They're not broody, upset Doctors – it's more "There's two of us! Brilliant!" But that's mostly in the playing, because they were having such a good time together that they brought that out. They get giggly with each other. It is, by lovely accident, a tremendous double-act. They're naturally funny together. Enough alike and enough dissimilar. Matt said it was like Laurel and Laurel, as if Hardy didn't show up – except he does in the form of John Hurt!

Was it hard to keep their voices and personalities distinct? As you say, they're both caffeinated Doctors. Maybe there's not as much contrast there as between other Doctors?

The weird thing is there's never that much contrast between Doctors. The truth is it's not wildly different how they're written. I've written quite a lot for both of them, and you just have the voice in your head, very clearly. Where they are similar is funny, because they're practically in unison, and where they are different is David is a cheeky, sexy, genuinely cool Doctor, up against a Doctor who thinks he's sexy and cool but is woefully wrong on that subject! And that's just naturally funny. That is quite a separation between the two. After the readthrough, which Matt and David were both very nervous of, I overheard them having a conversation,

and they were both saying more or less the same thing, which was "When I hear you do it, I keep thinking oh, is that how you do it?" They were having to deliberately separate themselves, because when you're hearing somebody else deliver Doctor dialogue, right next to you, who's clearly very good at it, you think "Oh, I would usually do this... I would ignore that line and hit this line..." And so they had to not infect each other!

This is the first Doctor Who adventure in 3D. How are you using that as a storytelling tool?

Not so much that the vast majority of the audience who watch it in 2D will be flummoxed, but we do make some use of it. If you look at something like *Avatar*, it's all about depth. And that's the best thing 3D can do, I think – make it a world that you want to get inside. We've got a really good entering the TARDIS shot, because now it really can be bigger on the inside. But beyond that I can't say much more, really.

You have somehow managed to keep the exact contents of this special remarkably secret... Oh, good.**I don't quite know how you've accomplished this.**

Well, it's lying, misleading, all those things. I can't guarantee it's stopped... **SFX**

"The Day Of The Doctor" is on BBC One on Saturday 23 November.

BACK TO THE FUTURE

If the TARDIS took you to 1963, what would you say to the people launching a little Saturday teatime show called *Doctor Who*?

MATT SMITH Wow, what a cool question. I think I'd just smile and go "Have a good time – don't change a thing. And, when they take it off the air, don't worry, we'll be back!"

JENNA COLEMAN I'd just want to wink at them, like "You have no idea..." I wouldn't want to change it by telling them anything. I'd just want to wink and them not understand. And then, one day, 50 years later, it's still going, stronger and stronger.

STEVEN MOFFAT I'd be frightened to say anything, because clearly what they did was so completely right. I think all of us – all *Doctor Who* fans – would want to go back and say "But he's supposed to be the hero. Lighten him up a bit." We'd all want to make it consistent with what came later. But we'd be wrong. That's what launched it. That was right, somehow – and makes Peter Cushing's more-consistent-with-the-later-Doctors version seem rather anaemic. I suppose that's what I'd say, but I'd be wrong. I should shut up. They clearly got it utterly, utterly right. I'd go back in time and hide in case by drifting through the streets I altered the course of anyone's thoughts!

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HEROES OF DOCTOR WHO

Saluting five decades in the TARDIS, Toby Hadoke picks the people who built Britain's ultimate TV legend

SYDNEY NEWMAN

(SERIES CREATOR 1963)

1 *Doctor Who* was the ultimate synthesis of his commercial instincts and appetite for quality. His idea of a non-romantic lead oddball travelling through space and time in a knackered police box has inspired both popular, bums-on-seats success and cult affection. It shouldn't work, yet it does: that's why he was a genius.



Ultimately, we owe it all to this guy. Thank you, Sydney.

VERITY LAMBERT

(PRODUCER 1963-1965)

2 A female former PA on her first producing job at the male dominated BBC, enduring gossip, condescension, and resistance to the silly children's show she'd been lumbered with. But her casting choices, her drive, and her pursuit of quality created a successful template that has endured.



Verity was the only female drama producer at the BBC – the youngest, too.

WILLIAM HARTNELL

(THE FIRST DOCTOR 1963-1966)

3 Hartnell loved playing *Doctor Who* and his ability to be both scary and comforting, antihero and father figure, dotty eccentric and mysterious adventurer made his Doctor beguiling. Without that edge and aged wisdom the character isn't so compelling, and at their best his successors have more of those two attributes than you'd think.



"I am a citizen of the universe and a gentleman to boot."



Terry Nation, Ray Cusick and their murderous pepperpots.

DELIA DERBYSHIRE

(THEME MUSIC ARRANGER 1963-1972)

7 Even Ron Grainer himself admitted that his never bettered, never changed *Doctor Who* theme owed as much to Delia Derbyshire as to him. Thanks to her genius the atmospherically charged '60s and '70s arrangements sound as if they have been torn from the fabric of space and time itself.



Ensuring fans would forever treasure the BBC Radiophonic Workshop.

BRIAN HODGSON & DICK MILLS

(SPECIAL SOUNDS 1963-1989)

8 Only two men's names accompanied the "Special Sounds" credit during the original series' entire run (Hodgson till 1973, Mills thereafter), so we're not cheating by having these geniuses together here: without them we wouldn't have had the TARDIS take-off, the hums and throbs of the Dalek city and the beeps and whooshes that made plywood doors and consoles sound so perfectly like the future.

CAROLE ANN FORD

(SUSAN FOREMAN 1963-1964)

9 The first *Doctor Who* girl, Susan established the template (getting into trouble, screaming and tripping over) and defied it at the same time (being weird and ethereal, bravely entering psychic communion with aliens). Like the best things *Who*, she had roots in modern-day Earth but added an extra-terrestrial twist.

PETER BRACHACKI

(SET DESIGNER 1963)

4 Peter Brachacki clearly didn't enjoy working on the show, but before he buggered off he left us with another of its constant, comforting presences: the TARDIS interior. Take a one-person operated central console, a rising column and some photographic blow-ups of pill packets and you've got yourself a design classic.



BERNARD LODGE

(GRAPHIC DESIGNER 1963-1975)

5 Amazing CGI renderings that they are, it's likely that today's titles will look dated in a decade or so. Not so Bernard Lodge's abstract sequences. From the ethereal, blobby strangeness of the Hartnell era to the classic time tunnel of Tom Baker's time, they boast visually superb, timeless, iconic imagery.

RON GRAINER

(THEME MUSIC COMPOSER 1963)

6 You say *Doctor Who* to anyone and they'll mutter "de-dummely-dum de-dummely-dum", or "ooo-weee-ooo" or both. It also seems to say "*Doctor Who*" within the catchy score, but in a strange musical way that is rhythmic yet weird, atmospheric yet exciting and just the best bloody theme tune ever.



TERRY NATION

(WRITER & DALEK CREATOR 1963-1979)

10 Nation wrote comedy and high drama and the secret of both is timing. Out of necessity his script was rushed into production and transformed *Doctor Who* from kids' adventure to sci-fi classic. Not *Doctor Who* as conceived by Sydney Newman maybe, but the reason it's still here today.

RAY CUSICK (DESIGNER 1963-1966)

11 The Daleks were designed to be built using affordable 1960s technology. The fact that this amazing visualisation is pretty much unaltered 50 years later is a testament to the genius of one of *Doctor Who*'s most shoddily treated contributors (his BBC contract denying him remuneration from commercial exploitation of his design).

PETER HAWKINS (DALEK VOICE ARTIST 1963-1968)

12 Probably the most imitated man in the playgrounds of 1960s Great Britain. Everyone knows what the Daleks sound like, and Hawkins' perfect pitch of declamatory intimidation and near mania are electrifying, alien and *scary*. The closer subsequent Skarsonian larynxes have been to his template the more successful they have been.



DUDLEY SIMPSON (INCIDENTAL MUSIC COMPOSER 1964-1980)

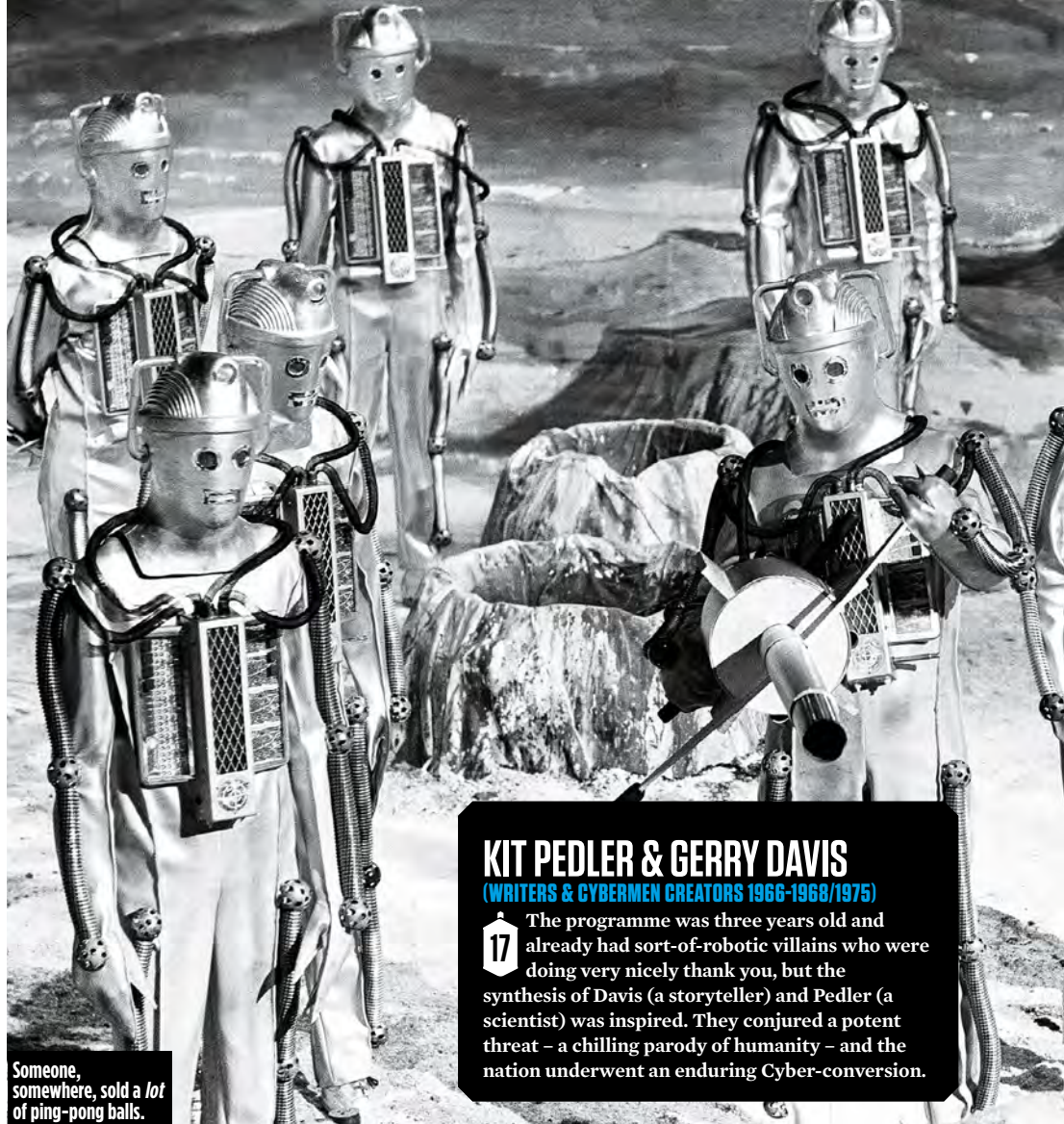
13 Incidental music is probably best when you don't notice it, but take it away and you realise how empty the programme is without it. Simpson's deft orchestration (often using traditional instruments, so his soundtracks have dated far less than those of the '80s) augmented many classic episodes with subtle brilliance.

DOUGLAS CAMFIELD (DIRECTOR 1964-1976)

14 Douglas worked on the first episode and rose through the ranks to become, rightly, the most lauded director to work on the programme. His productions were always gutsy and atmospheric, pushing the envelope of what was possible on a small budget and inspiring the likes of Graeme Harper in the process.

PAT GORMAN (EXTRA & BIT PART ACTOR 1965-1985)

15 When Peter Capaldi did his first interview about *Doctor Who* he commended the actors who'd sweated under latex. Well, Gorman sweated under plenty, and this recognisable stalwart pops up in practically every story of the '70s, proving more than up to the task when called upon to appear in the flesh and deliver a line or two.



Someone, somewhere, sold a lot of ping-pong balls.

KIT PEDLER & GERRY DAVIS (WRITERS & CYBERMEN CREATORS 1966-1968/1975)

17 The programme was three years old and already had sort-of-robotic villains who were doing very nicely thank you, but the synthesis of Davis (a storyteller) and Pedler (a scientist) was inspired. They conjured a potent threat – a chilling parody of humanity – and the nation underwent an enduring Cyber-conversion.

PETER CUSHING (THE MOVIE DOCTOR 1965-1966)

16 In colour, on the big screen – yes, the films often jar (they travel back in time to change events in their own timeline in the second one: that'd never happen today) but Cushing's genial, inventive performance is wonderful and he's the first to demonstrate that another actor could successfully play the part.

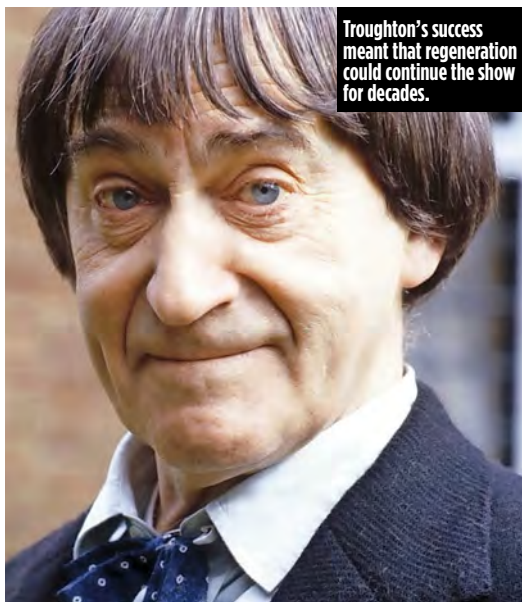


PATRICK TROUGHTON (THE SECOND DOCTOR 1966-1969)

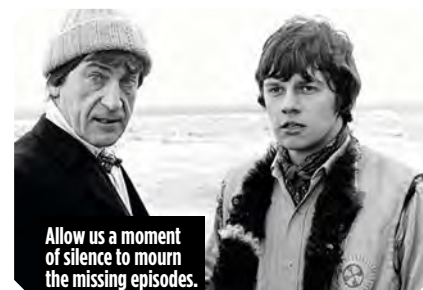
18 Almost any actor will nominate Troughton as their favourite Doctor – there's something about that performance: gravitas and depth mixed with a pixie-like playfulness. He redefined the series by offering a totally different characterisation, creating the now accepted template for the character.

FRAZER HINES (JAMIE MCCRIMMON 1966-1969)

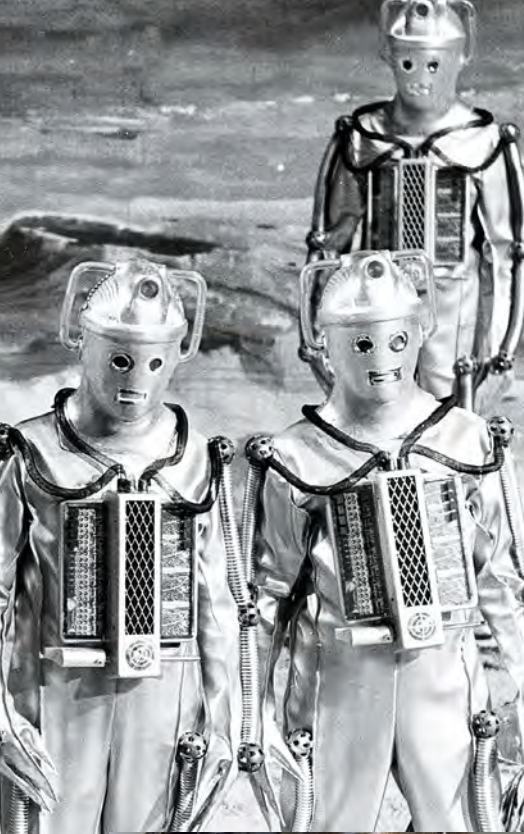
19 Jamie is the longest running companion in the sense that he appears in only one story less than his Doctor. Proof that male companions are just as good, he's brave and fun, and his rapport with Troughton defines a fondly remembered and sadly mostly lost era.



Troughton's success meant that regeneration could continue the show for decades.



Allow us a moment of silence to mourn the missing episodes.



NICHOLAS COURTNEY (BRIGADIER LETHBRIDGE-STEWART 1968-1989)

20 On and off screen, the Doctor's most perfect advocate and protector. A soldier whom the liberal Doctor can patronise and chastise but who is nevertheless handy for blowing everything up when the story needs a conclusion. The effortless grace and charm with which Courtney and Lethbridge-Stewart conducted themselves is a lesson to us all.

TERRANCE DICKS (SCRIPT EDITOR & WRITER 1968-1983)

21 His ubiquity on DVDs and the convention circuit (because he's such a game supporter of the show) as well as his oft imitated vocal mannerisms shouldn't allow us to underestimate quite how incomparable his contributions are. From writing Target novels to script editing the Pertwee era and contributing some fine scripts too, Terrance Dicks IS *Doctor Who*.



JOHN ABINERI (GUEST ACTOR 1968-1979)

22 He represents all of those fine journeymen, I-Know-The-Face-But actors. Not stars but certainly respected by their peers, and who gave *Who* repeated good service. Bernard Kay, Norman Jones, Milton Johns, Kevin Stoney, David Collings, and Alan Rowe were always fun to spot giving their all (sometimes more than a script really deserved).

ROBERT HOLMES (SCRIPT WRITER & EDITOR 1968-1986)

23 The ultimate *Doctor Who* writer, who could world-build in a sentence, utilise archaic phraseology to bring lustre to dialogue, create extremely memorable supporting characters and fulfil his self-confessed goal of "scaring the little buggers". Making him producer Philip Hinchcliffe's script editor created one of the show's most successful partnerships.



JON PERTWEE (THE THIRD DOCTOR 1970-1974)

24 When he strode into a room, managing to carry off frills and velvet with élan, you didn't look at anyone else. The "tall lightbulb" was testy with bureaucracy, knew how to conduct himself amongst royalty and had his own kung-fu! "I am The Doctor!" he would bark. Absolutely no doubt about that.

BARRY LETTS (PRODUCER 1970-1974)

25 The man who brought a conscience to *Doctor Who*. His era may have been immersed in militaria, but a barbed comment about blowing everything up, careerist politicians or environmental catastrophe were never far away. His environmentalism was ahead of its time and yet housed within some of the most exciting and memorable adventures. Oh, and he cast Tom Baker. And Elisabeth Sladen.



ROGER DELGADO (THE MASTER 1971-1973)

26 Growing up watching old *Doctor Who*, most things weren't quite as good as the visions created by years of reading Target books and daydreaming. Yet Roger Delgado's Master was actually better. No juvenile imaginings could recreate his suave, witty, terrifying and utterly classy performance. A fine, much loved, much missed and never bettered actor.

JAMES ACHESON (COSTUME DESIGNER 1972-1976)

27 An Oscar winner! Useful ammo in the dark days when the ill-informed moaned about crap production values. Illustrious CV aside, he created the most famous Doctor silhouette ever, which casts a floppy hatted, lengthy scarfed shadow over everyone else. Unusual and arresting, it's a masterpiece of unforced eccentricity. He designed the Time Lord race's most enduring look too. ➔





The perfect companion, and very sadly missed.

CHRIS ACHILLEOS (TARGET BOOK COVER ARTIST AND ILLUSTRATOR 1973-1975)

28 There's a generation for whom Achilleos' beautifully rendered, evocative composite images were the ultimate representation of *Doctor Who*. Not only was some of his painting extraordinarily photo realistic (his Davros on "Genesis Of The Daleks"), he managed to conjure atmosphere with original compositions that were neither too literal nor distractingly avant-garde.



JOHN FRIEDLANDER (PROSTHETICS AND VISUAL EFFECTS DESIGNER 1973-1975)

29 A mask which fits the actor so closely that his own eyes and mouth are visible elevates your baddy to a bona fide character, enabling fine performances to radiate from within the latex. Visually the stubby, pock-marked Linx, and the wrinkled, deformed Davros sit easily alongside any modern latex protagonists.

ELISABETH SLADEN (SARAH JANE SMITH 1973-2010)

30 The ultimate *Doctor Who* companion; so much so that it's easy to take her acting for granted. But she's consistently amazing; bantering with Tom Baker, scared but brave at the same time, funny and capable enough to be a TV heroine but vulnerable enough to be an identification figure.

PHILIP HINCHCLIFFE (PRODUCER 1974-1976)

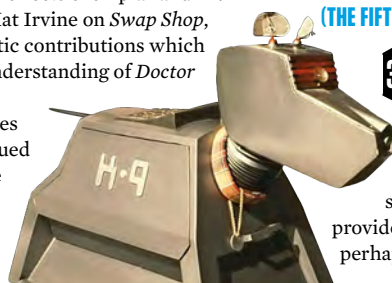
31 Hinchcliffe took a successful show and notched it up a gear, ultimately producing many of the programme's unassailable classics. His more gutsy approach cut through the cosiness creeping into the rightly loved UNIT era and his keen instincts ensured his rigorously conceived scripts always looked good and had dramatic intensity.

TOM BAKER (THE FOURTH DOCTOR 1974-1981)

32 No one had quite *been* the Doctor in the way that wide-eyed, mop-haired, toothy-grinned Tom Baker was. Yes, he's eccentric and dripping with alien unpredictability, but his best performances add righteous fury and quiet danger. His larger-than-life character off-screen has rightly promoted him to national treasure status.

MAT IRVINE (VISUAL EFFECTS DESIGNER 1977-1984)

33 To grow up in the '70s and '80s was to enjoy visual effects exemplar and K-9 wrangler Mat Irvine on *Swap Shop*, giving enthusiastic contributions which enhanced our understanding of *Doctor Who*'s essential behind-the-scenes graft. His continued adherence to the art of the mullet also borders on the heroic.



What makes it more brilliant is that Julian Glover's under there.

DOUGLAS ADAMS (SCRIPT WRITER & EDITOR 1978-1979)

34 People who scoffed at *Doctor Who* liked *The Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy*, so it was always nice to point out to them that this high minded, intellectually acceptable proponent of popular sci-fi honed his trademark mix of outlandish concepts and clever jokes in the TARDIS.

JOHN NATHAN-TURNER (PRODUCER 1981-1989)

35 The most divisive figure in the show's history? Possibly, but he was a breath of fresh air when he joined the show: clearly a man of vision and serious intent. By the end he was vilified but most now attest that *Doctor Who* would have ended much earlier without his tenacity.

PETER DAVISON (THE FIFTH DOCTOR 1982-1984)

36 Perhaps because his fresh-faced looks make him appear misleadingly bland, the most underrated actor of all the Doctors; he never gives a duff performance and his dashing, often tetchy, sometimes perplexed interpretation provides great depth to a Doctor who had perhaps the biggest shoes to fill. ➔



When the bailiffs arrived, everybody tried to prevent them taking the furniture.

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Hands up who didn't realise that was a wig on first watch.

COLIN BAKER

(THE SIXTH DOCTOR 1984-1986)

37 The one who was put on hiatus. The one who was sacked. The one with the terrible costume. And yet the programme's finest ambassador: a loyal supporter who has been able to show just what a great Doctor he is through Big Finish.

SYLVESTER McCOY

(THE SEVENTH DOCTOR 1987-1989 PLUS 1996)

38 The man who joined the show at its low point who, in three short seasons under an unsupportive BBC, managed to take the series from panto-embarrassment to ambitious questing adventure, his natural quirkiness and Chaplinesque antics hiding a mysterious figure with depth.



Someone must have spent hours sewing all those badges on.

ANDREW CARTMEL

(SCRIPT EDITOR 1987-1989)

39 Andrew Cartmel came to an unloved BBC has-been with a vision, using a number of worthy influences from genre fiction whilst infusing the show with a new mythology and angry, rebellious subtext.

PHILIP SEGAL

(EXECUTIVE PRODUCER 1996)

40 *Doctor Who* was dead when Segal revived it by demonstrating that it could fit easily into the modern televisual landscape. "The TV Movie" isn't perfect, but he fought to fulfil his vision and his tenacity showed that there was life in the old Time Lord yet.

PAUL MCGANN

(THE EIGHTH DOCTOR 1996)

41 Fandom breathed a sigh of relief when a British actor with clout was announced as the Stateside Doctor. Someone in the upper echelons of his profession, that he might do a convention or reprise the role on audio seemed inconceivable, but *Doctor Who* never ceases to pleasantly surprise us.

BIG FINISH

(AUDIO PRODUCERS 1999-)

43 It's a testament to the quality of their product that, having given us original stories during the wilderness years, they were allowed to carry on after the series came back. The "But it's not canon" bleaters, who think "Time-Flight" more worthy than *The Holy Terror*, are missing out.



Now there's a room that nightmares are made of.

RUSSELL T DAVIES

(EXECUTIVE PRODUCER, SHOWRUNNER AND CHIEF WRITER 2005-2010)

44 He brought back a series that was considered a joke and made it a popular success, generating column inches in both tabloids and broadsheets. Paying homage whilst adding to the mythos, he left with the show breaking records and on everybody's lips. To those who criticise we say, "Go on then, you do it."



VIRGIN BOOKS

(DOCTOR WHO NOVELS 1991-1997)

42 *Doctor Who* is now far more than a television series, but when it wasn't even one of those its fan-base needed something, and Virgin Books heroically filled a gap. Producing stories that often complemented or transcended the mother series, they developed the professional careers of many fan writers, and they got kids reading.

JULIE GARDNER

(EXECUTIVE PRODUCER 2005-2010)

45 Yes, it was great that uber-fan Russell T Davies was there to usher the series back but somebody coming to the show without baggage undoubtedly helped refine it for the 21st century. And what a *Doctor Who* advocate she became, whilst doing much of the hard graft that got this difficult show broadcast and brilliant.



STEVEN MOFFAT

(SCRIPT WRITER 2005- & SHOWRUNNER 2010-)

48 Having provided some of the relaunched show's most acclaimed episodes, Moffat took the giant step of filling RTD's not inconsiderable shoes. Immediately redrafting the show as a romantic fairytale, he turned childhood staples into overgrown nightmares. His casting of Matt Smith and Peter Capaldi shows that storytelling isn't his only skill.

The sonic screwdriver: also makes a very good torch.



All glammed up for New York City... oops.

DAVID TENNANT

(THE TENTH DOCTOR 2005-2010)

49 It's easy to forget how successful Eccleston had been and how cautiously the public approached this relatively little known actor. And he became undoubtedly the most successful Doctor ever. He is also one of us, and possibly the nicest man on the planet.

MATT SMITH

(THE ELEVENTH DOCTOR 2010-2013)

50 The definitive old man in a young man's body. All physical pirouettes, boyish enthusiasm, skewiff physiognomy and alien awkwardness, he's as fascinating a portrayal of the Doctor as you could hope for. Any twenty-something who can watch "The Tomb Of The Cybermen" in 2009 and love it is alright by us! **SFX**

For details of Toby's November West End appearances and his continuing Big Finish podcasts, go to www.tobyhadoke.com



Not a fan of action figures, we hear...

CHRISTOPHER ECCLESTON

(THE NINTH DOCTOR 2005)

46 Eccleston's leftfield casting completely defied expectation: this wouldn't be the traditionally dotty or dandy Time Lord. We got a haunted war survivor, and Eccleston's apparent discomfort with comedy actually served to make him seem like a lost child in a dark universe.

BILLIE PIPER

(ROSE TYLER 2005-2006 AND LOTS OF TIMES SINCE)

47 "Oh no, not her!" we screamed. She was the compromise: the nod to modern telly's crap way of doing things. A bloody pop star to appeal to teenage idiots. How wrong we were. Billie Piper was a revelation and this splendid actress soon became the lynchpin of the successfully relaunched series.

THE DALEK KILL LIST

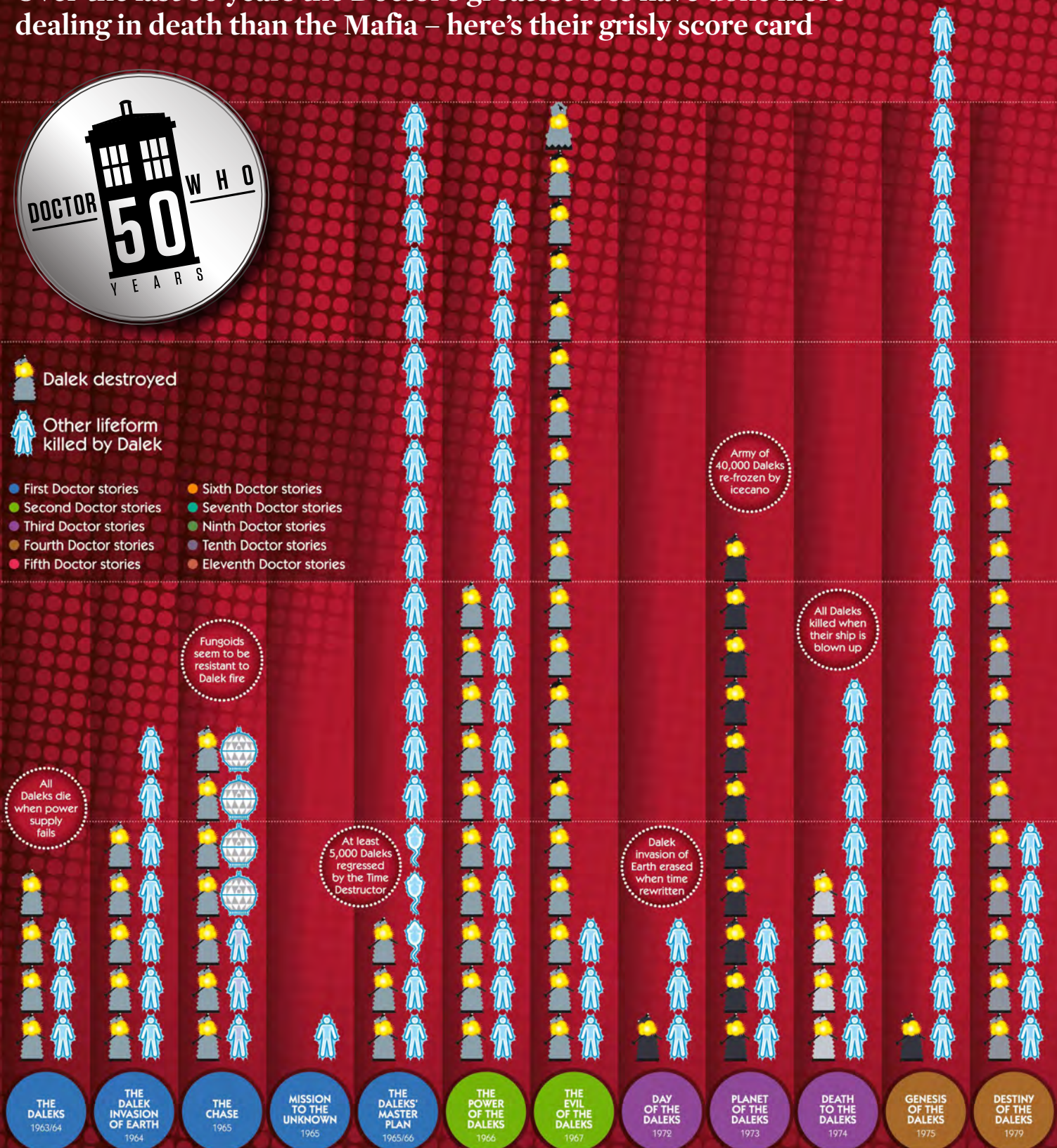
Over the last 50 years the Doctor's greatest foes have done more dealing in death than the Mafia – here's their grisly score card

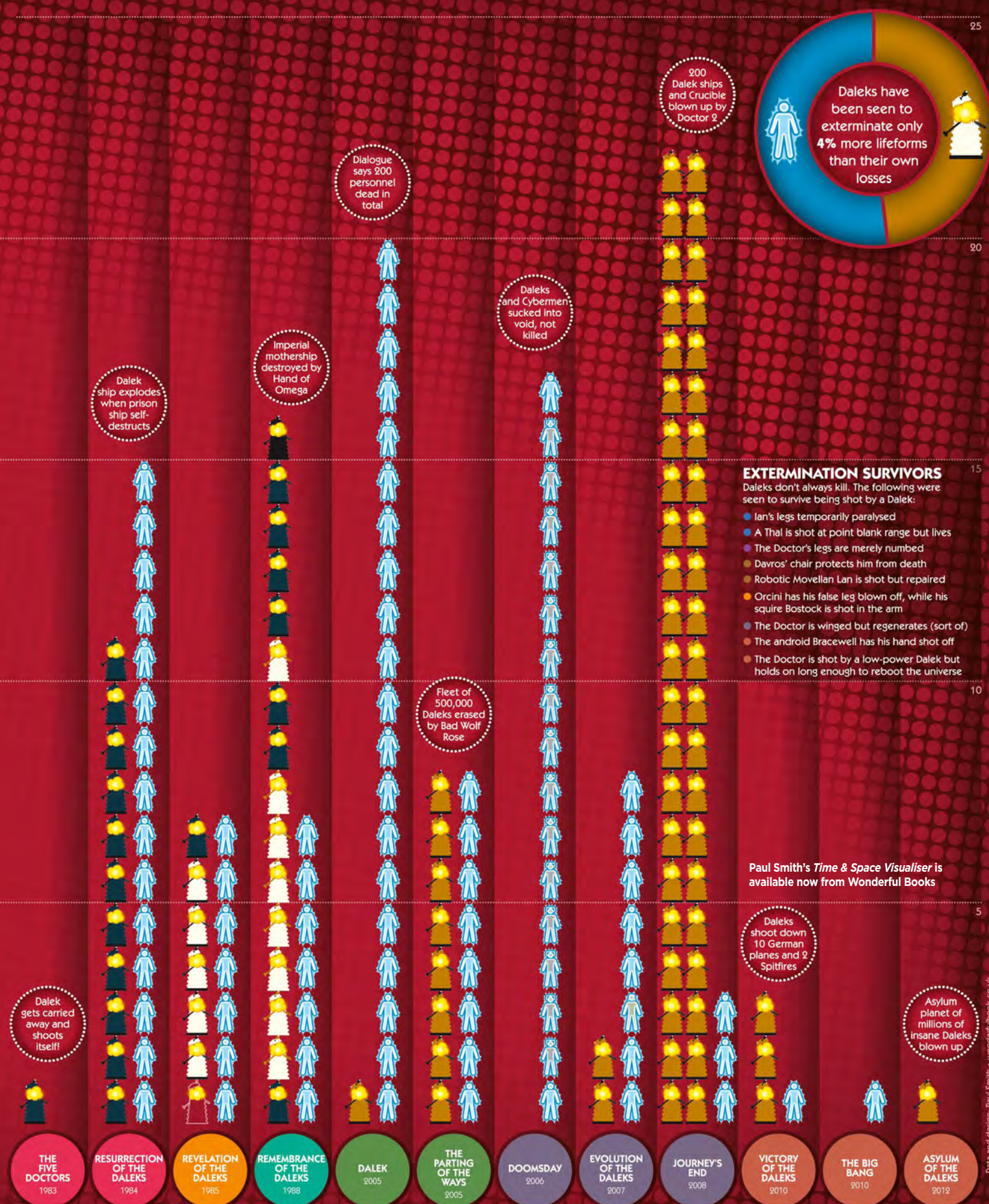


Dalek destroyed

Other lifeform killed by Dalek

- First Doctor stories
- Second Doctor stories
- Third Doctor stories
- Fourth Doctor stories
- Fifth Doctor stories
- Sixth Doctor stories
- Seventh Doctor stories
- Ninth Doctor stories
- Tenth Doctor stories
- Eleventh Doctor stories





AN UNEARTHLY CHILD





An Unearthly Child

It was the improbable beginning of a show that went on to take over the world. Graham Kibble-White traces the origins of the first ever *Doctor Who* story

IT WAS A DRAMA DESIGNED BY COMMITTEE TO fill an inconvenient gap in the TV schedules, and realised by inexperienced programme makers who'd inherited a set of scripts they were desperate to junk. Not only that, the original director had walked and, when it did go in front of the cameras, the first episode was deemed too poor to air.

Burdened with a name that unhelpfully echoed the previous winter's box office titan, *Dr No*, it seemed as though *Doctor Who* was going to be a similarly sized dud.

And yet, when its restaged opener, "An Unearthly Child", screened on 23 November 1963, it managed to invoke some kind of eerie alchemy. From out of that fog at 76 Totters Lane emerged a new and unkillable addition to British folklore. Fifty years on, we're still caught up in its story.

Waris Hussein was only 24 and a recent graduate from the BBC's six-month TV directing course when, as a member of staff, he was assigned the first ever *Doctor Who* serial. He was unaware at the time his predecessor Rex Tucker

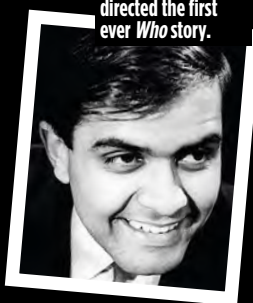
had quit the show. "I wouldn't have wanted to know that," he tells *SFX* half-a-century on, "because then what do you do? Do you feel inferior and think, 'Well, am I second best?'"

He also wasn't thrilled with the scripts written by Australian actor-turned-writer Anthony Coburn. "I was faced with the introductory episode," Hussein continues, "and the subsequent three set in the Stone Age. I was educated in Cambridge, I directed Shakespeare and Arthur Miller and now I'm doing 'ug' and 'og'. Was this to be my destiny?"

His collaborator was first-time TV producer Verity Lambert, then just 27. She'd also inherited Coburn's scripts, which had been commissioned by Tucker, and in June of 1963 she and story editor David Whitaker had even approached staff writer and producer Terence Dudley – who'd eventually work on the show in the 1980s – about coming up with a replacement. But it was not to be.

Hussein recalls: "My negativity about the project was rampant. I said to Verity, 'How are we going to make this work?' And she replied, 'Waris, we *have* to!'" ➔

Waris Hussein directed the first ever *Who* story.



"Yuk – what kind of show are we on here?!"



As casting began, Carole Ann Ford, a 23-year-old mother of one, was brought in to portray the Doctor's granddaughter, the unearthly child herself, schoolgirl Susan Foreman.

"I was always playing under my age," Ford tells *SFX*. "Before *Doctor Who* I was working steadily in theatre, films and TV – and all sorts of different parts. Maybe it's because I was a singer and dancer as well, so I was able to accept musicals and things. I can't put my finger on it, but I was incredibly lucky." She says she was attracted to *Doctor Who* because "it seemed very exciting. Oh, there was nothing else like it."

A DIFFICULT LEAD

Meanwhile, after consulting with a couple of other possible leads (see below), Lambert had come to the conclusion she wanted William Hartnell in the title role. As Waris Hussein reveals, the actor had to be handled with care. "William was a consummate professional, and he considered himself in every way to be somebody worthwhile. We had to honour that. And he was very nervous about us – a female producer and an Indian director. So we had to nurture him in a funny way and give him his leeway. But he came to respect us."

Ford, meanwhile, was very much the junior member in the quartet of the Doctor, Ian (William Russell), Barbara (Jacqueline Hill) and Susan. "Oh yes, everybody treated me like



The late Jacqueline Hill played history teacher Barbara.

The first of that battered blue box's journeys we got to see...



Hill) and Susan. "Oh yes, everybody treated me like that. Especially Bill [Hartnell]. I adored him. We immediately had a rapport. He was sweet and lovely, but he took his grandfather role very seriously and couldn't quite grasp the fact I was a woman with a baby. He really treated me like a 15-year-old and expressed his opinion about all sorts of things... which I'd rather he hadn't."

As for her other co-stars, Ford says: "I was in awe of Jackie, and it was only later I discovered she wasn't an 'awesome' person at all. She was very warm and lovely, but she was shy. And, as with quite a lot of shy people, she sort of withheld and stepped back a bit when she met new people. William Russell, though, was absolutely gorgeous – delicious!"

Originally Susan was written as oblique and alien, which is how Ford pitched it in the first version of the opening episode recorded on the evening of 27 September. A

ramshackle affair, beleaguered with technical glitches, it also featured a far spikier portrayal from Hartnell. Neither found favour with the BBC's head of drama – and core architect of *Who* – Sydney Newman who insisted both be toned down for an unprecedented re-record, which took place on 18 October.

"I didn't go into this to play the girl next door," laments Ford. "However, I can understand why they wanted her to be like that. They obviously hoped the kids out there could identify with her."

When the BFI screened "An Unearthly Child" earlier this year in London, one of the early scenes caused much laughter. In the establishing shots of Coal Hill School – where Susan's a pupil and Ian and Barbara teach – there's a group of kids exiting

"Bill Hartnell couldn't grasp the fact I was a woman with a baby"

The Almost Doctors

William Hartnell wasn't the first choice for the role of the Doctor – story editor David Whitaker favoured Cyril Cusack (right). "Cyril would have given us a Doctor with a dry sense of Irish humour," reckons Waris Hussein. "He would have been more complicated and avuncular."



Meanwhile, an offer was actually made to Shakespearian actor Leslie French, at the recommendation of associate producer Mervyn Pinfield. "I think Leslie would have been a bit more academic," says Hussein. "He was straight out of Oxbridge. I don't think that would have been as effective, he didn't have the subtlety of Cyril." As history shows, French knocked back the part – but did eventually appear in the 25th anniversary story "Silver Nemesis".

Aural History

Composed by Ron Grainer and realised by Delia Derbyshire and the BBC's Radiophonic Workshop, *Doctor Who's* title music is as vital to the show as the TARDIS.

"Both Verity [Lambert] and I went to their studios in Maida Vale," remembers Waris Hussein, "and we were there as it was conceived. We'd sit and listen to this thing, this *sound*. I thought it was incredible. Whatever the show was going to be, we knew the music was fantastic."

"I must say, I prefer it to the theme they have now," says Carole Ann Ford. "It's become too musical, too melodic. The discordancy of the original made it more like the thrust you get from an engine – a powerful engine."

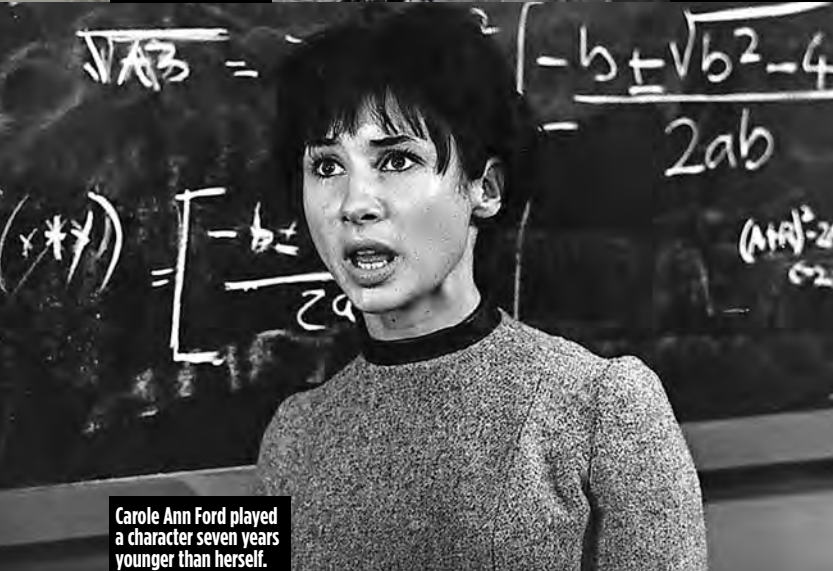


Verity Lambert at the beginning of quite a journey.



But the Daleks would have made better first enemies...

TARDIS crew, you ain't seen nothin' yet!



Carole Ann Ford played a character seven years younger than herself.

a classroom. Two girls stop to compare notes, prompting one rapsallion to intervene with a Kenneth Williams-esque, "Oooo, yes!" Had he been instructed to vamp it up like the *Carry On* star? "I can't honestly say," responds Hussein. "I just wanted to establish – with my five extras – people coming out of a classroom. All I was aware of was the way the girls look and the awkwardness with which I told them to do something. In those days you couldn't retake. If I'd done that now I'd say, 'Wait a minute, this is crap, let's do it again.'"

PREHISTORIC DRAMA

But there was little levity in what followed, with the TARDIS materialising in the Stone Age and the time travellers brutalised by the Tribe of Gum.

"Well, you've got to play that," reasons Hussein. "The violence is innate in the fact you're dealing with primitive people who kill in order to survive. The villain [Jeremy Young's Kal] was somebody capable of total violence and even our hero considers using a rock to crush someone else's [Za, played by Derek Newark] head in.

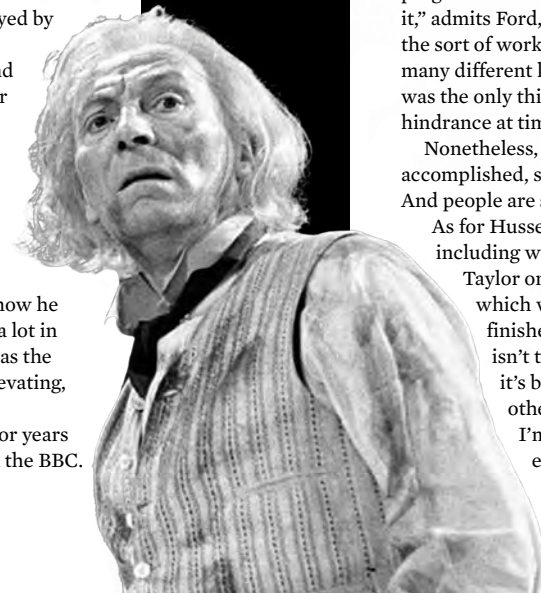
"The point was we did not want to be laughed at. And it's too easy to laugh at people in skins with matted hair grunting. I was so scared of it ending up as silly. So you've got to try and make it as serious as possible."

Carole Ann Ford agrees. "As an actor, you can't be worrying about how the finished thing will look," she says. "You've just got to do it very seriously, otherwise it won't work. *You're* telling the story – you have to believe that story."

Hussein also tried to instil some inventiveness into how he shot the show. "I did use my camera movements quite a lot in Studio D, Lime Grove, with cameras that were as large as the operators themselves – and as heavy. I was tracking, elevating, going down. This was a huge demand."

Throughout this production period – and arguably for years beyond – *Doctor Who* remained almost a pariah within the BBC.

William Hartnell, potential head-basher.



The young team of outsiders who'd formed the show were a breed apart from the patrician, pipe-smoking execs who ran the corporation. Hussein recalls that when *Doctor Who* proved something of a success he would actively avoid bumping into Rex Tucker in the corridor, who seemed to bear some resentment towards the programme. Along the way, Verity Lambert continually campaigned to record in the BBC's glitteringly modern Television Centre (opened in 1960) – a demand that was only acceded to in May the following year, for episodes two and three of "The Aztecs".

"I was never aware of any of the politics," says Ford. "But I'm one of those people who goes into things blinkered. I did know, however, that we all hoped desperately we could get into TV Centre and we were terribly grateful when we did. But I didn't think in any terms of *Doctor Who* being an underdog. I just thought that's the way it was."

Both Carole Ann Ford and Waris Hussein would leave the programme the year after its debut. "Initially I did kick against it," admits Ford, "Before *Doctor Who* I had been doing exactly the sort of work I wanted to as a character actress, playing as many different kinds of parts as possible. But afterwards, Susan was the only thing that anyone was interested in. It was an awful hindrance at times."

Nonetheless, looking back on what she and that small team accomplished, she accepts "it was the most amazing thing to do. And people are so appreciative of it. That's nice for one's ego."

As for Hussein, who went on to Hollywood and films – including working with Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor on TV movie *Divorce His – Divorce Hers* (1973), which was so critically mauled, he says it nearly finished his career – one might suggest *Doctor Who* isn't the biggest thing he's done... "Funnily enough, it's beginning to be," he muses. "I have all those other things, but *Doctor Who* is iconic. The fact I'm still recognised for it 50 years later – it energises me." **SFX**



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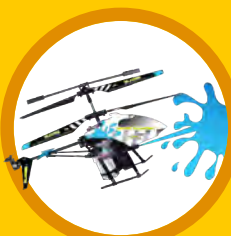
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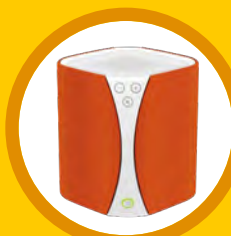
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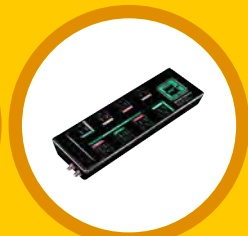
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David Morrissey

The Walking Dead's Governor on being the bad guy the fans love to hate

WORDS BY JOSEPH McCABE PHOTOGRAPHY BY FRANCO ORIGLIA

There's a sense of time displacement that occurs when you sit down with David Morrissey. It begins by looking at his face, a rugged hill in which the eyes, deep-set and piercing, sit like still lakes. Then there's that voice, bourbon poured slowly over gravel, suggestive of a long-ago era when men rode horses, when the land was not yet tame... A land not unlike that portrayed on TV's *The Walking Dead*, on which Morrissey returns this season as the infamous Governor. The actor has won a legion of fans across the globe by portraying the one-eyed former ruler of Woodbury, a man whose soul was eviscerated by the loss of his wife and daughter, but whose mind lives on in torment. Indeed the Governor, more than any other character on *The Walking Dead*, exists as an eerie counterpoint to its titular creatures. As Morrissey tells *SFX*, he couldn't be happier about that.

BIODATA

- **OCCUPATION:** Actor
- **BORN:** 21 June 1964
- **FROM:** Liverpool
- **GREATEST HITS:** *One Summer, State Of Play, Red Riding, Blitz, Doctor Who, Thorne*
- **RANDOM FACT:** Morrissey prepared for his role in "The Next Doctor" by studying the performances of Hartnell, Troughton and Tom Baker.

► Given *The Walking Dead's* phenomenal success, how much pressure do you feel this season?

People love the show as much as we do. We're on it and we love it, and we want to do our best on it. The pressure we feel – the good pressure – is that we want to tell the story in the best way we can. And we all egg each other on in that way. Not just in the writing and the directing, but the whole crew. Everybody wants the best for the show. They love being associated with it; they love going out and telling people that they work on the show. So the pressure is very positive from top to bottom.

► You're playing a very nasty character. How have fans responded to you?

They've responded positively in a very negative way. People boo me, they shout at me, but I think they love to hate him. He is that character who does despicable things but then he can wrong-foot you every now and again. He can do something really generous and nice. There's a bit at the end of 3.16 where he's off to attack the prison, and he turns to Tyrese and gives him a gun and walks away. You think he's gonna kill this guy and he just hands him this gun. That's what makes him challenging for people. Because they *do* like him.

► Matt Smith said he was terrified of the Governor. Does that mean that the Doctor is terrified of himself?

Ah! That's a very meaty question [laughs]. It's great that he's frightened of me. Maybe there could be a merger... No, I did the Christmas Special where I played "the next Doctor". We filmed the Christmas Special in February, and then David Tennant announced that he was gonna leave. Russell T Davies called me up and said, "Do you mind if we do a thing where we say you're gonna be the next Doctor?" Which I wasn't gonna be. I said, "Yeah, sure." It was nine months of complete craziness, of people camping outside my house. Russell said, "But you can't tell anyone." I said, "Okay. I can tell my kids." He went, "No! You can't tell anyone! Not your kids, anyone! Because they'll tell people at school." So my kids kept coming home and saying, "Are you Doctor Who?" I was like, "I can't tell you." It was mad. But it was great, because I was able to say to my son, "If you do your homework, I'll tell you." Then he'd do it, and I wouldn't tell him [laughs].

"Doctor Who was nine months of complete craziness"

► How does *Walking Dead* fandom differ from *Doctor Who* fandom?

Wasn't there a convention where the *Star Wars* guys and the *Doctor Who* guys had a fight? My god. That's like some sort of mad Ricky Gervais thing. I want to see that... *The Walking Dead* fans are the best fans in the world [laughs]. But I'm very proud to be associated with *Doctor Who* as well. It's a great show.

► How does the show keep zombies fresh?

In the fridge! This season, you read the episode and you think, "Well, okay..." Then you get on set and you think, "Whoa! My god! They're doing *that*!?" It's fantastic what Greg [Nicotero] and his team do. It also never ceases to amaze me – the guys who come in and play the zombies, they are so committed. Some of them should be committed [laughs]. We feed off of their energy, their commitment. It's just amazing what they do.

► Do you see it as a metaphor for today's world?

Coming to the show as a fan, what I was a fan of was what I thought the show was about – human survival, and how humans would do anything in order to survive. The zombies and the world we inhabit offer the chance to ask questions – "What would you do in that time? What would you do if that threat was coming at you?" A threat is a threat, and we deliver it in all seriousness, but it gives us a chance to explore human nature.





POWER





As the *Misfits* head into their fifth and final year of community service Jordan Farley visits the set and discovers A-grade superpowers in the offing

DE LA SOUL MAY HAVE thought three the magic number, but when it comes to British genre TV five is the real miracle figure. After all, countless shows have suffered the axe after one or two series, but only a handful have blown out the candles on their fifth birthday cake. The latest to OD on icing sugar and frosted filling is *Misfits*, which comes to an end after half a decade on E4 this autumn – something the show's creator, Howard Overman, says was the plan all along. Sort of.

"For some reason that's always been the idea as the number we would stop at. I don't know why five. Other people seem to stop at five. But it's a classic mistake you can make, in your first series to think, 'I'll hold that back for a second series, that's brilliant.' And then you don't get a second series. You never know what's going to happen."

Misfits' road to the big 0-5 has been rockier than most; laden with problematic cast departures and writers who couldn't make the grade, leaving it up to Overman to script all but six of the show's 37 episodes. When *SFX* speaks with Overman mere hours before *Misfits'* final ever shot is due to go before the cameras, he doesn't shy away from addressing series four's shortcomings.

"I was really disappointed with the start of series four. It was a tricky one because it was the new gang and there were massive problems with the loss of a certain character at short notice. The start of the series was not our finest hour by a long stretch, but we were only a few weeks out of filming when suddenly everything was thrown up in the air, so I think series four suffered across the board from a sudden scramble to fix things."

Fortunately for all involved, series five of *Misfits* will mark the first time that the Show's core cast has remained unchanged between series since its second year, while the only other man to ever write for *Misfits*, Jon Brown, will return to pen two of the series' eight episodes. "There's no new core cast, which is a real relief because it's really difficult writing it and for the actors, and you're replacing people the fans are hugely fond of."

INNER-CITY SATAN

The core cast may be unbothered, but the boiler suit brigade has another full-time member adopting the orange – Alex, who we last saw mere moments before a heart transplant. Series five picks up days after the operation, on the eve of the storm's first anniversary, but quicker than you can say "Save me, Barry!" Finn's been possessed by Beelzebub and it's left to the remaining Thamesmead terrors to save the day.

It's this premiere episode which *SFX* witnesses filming during our day on *Misfits'* new set, former RAF base Daws Hill. Tucked away in the far corner of the complex is a warehouse doubling as *Misfits'* famous watering hole but today, instead of glimpsing Curtis or Alex pull pints behind the bar, the lights are devil red, inverted crosses adorn

the walls, "Firestarter" by The Prodigy is being pumped out at a ground-trembling volume and Finn is surrounded by a group of scouts behaving in a way that would make Baden-Powell blush. Embedded among Finn's devil-worshipping do-gooders are Rudy and Abbey, already brainwashed and falling over themselves to hear Finn's every word.

Finn is in luck, however. Jess is still in possession of her worldly faculties and has taken drastic measures to save her wannabe suitor's soul. Brandishing a handgun, a bottle of Sprite and an apt verse from the bible, she bursts onto the scene only for it all to go a bit wrong. Possession may be where the series begins, but as we quickly learn powers is what the series is building to. *Proper* powers at that.

"It was always a joke. We coined the phrase in the first series, 'I want stuff off the A-list', but I was always determined it would never be our central characters that would get the A-list powers," Overman says. "In some way our gang always have to be the underdogs.

"There's a rival gang that slowly comes together over the course of the series and those guys have much better powers. It's this slow-burn thing where this other gang come together and you're not quite sure what their intentions are going to be."

To fully realise Overman's vision for the finale the team were given extra time and money to film the episode. Not that *Misfits* is losing sight of what it does best: extremely silly superpowers. As well as a woman who can knit the future into a rather fetching sweater, there's a character who can transform into a turtle, another who can shag powers away and a few familiar freaks who'll return as part of series five's superhero support group.

SUPERHEROES ANONYMOUS

A year of living with troublesome powers has finally taken its toll on the residents of Thamesmead, who have started meeting every Tuesday in a huge bunker for moral support.

"We toyed with the idea of a support group for quite a while," says Overman. "Because we played with the powers being as much a curse as a blessing, I liked the idea there was somewhere all the people who were wrestling with powers could go and talk about it. Rather than someone going out and becoming a superhero straight away it was about the burden the powers had placed on them.

"Dark Rudy in particular takes to the support group because he's already quite troubled. He finds his niche and his role in talking to people and providing support. The rest of our gang do go to the support group, but they slightly misuse it and it plays a role in gathering together this other gang."

The skills Dark Rudy picks up in superhero support come in handy with Abbey, whose secret will finally be revealed this year. "What we've found is Dark Rudy, the wimpy mardarse Rudy and Abbey get on," says Joe Gilgun (Rudy). "They're both pretty much in the same boat and he gives her a pep talk. They share a similarity of not having an identity."



One day every man will wear his shirt exactly like this.



ADULT SUPERVISION

Terrifying probation worker Greg (Shaun Dooley) is back and takes part in one of the series' most outrageous scenes

"I'm pretty sure Howard hates me," says Nathan McMullen. "The most ridiculous thing was yesterday, filming a naked shower scene at 50 frames per second like I was in a L'Oreal advert. It was absolutely horrendous. There's a bit of a revelation from Greg towards Finn, he was involved in the shower scene so that kind of says it all.

"The scariest thing about Shaun when he

plays Greg is when he psyches himself up before a scene to make himself not laugh," McMullen continues. "I'm having a naked shower and he's growling, 'Yes, come on, Finn, Finn, Finn.'"

"He wears Lynx," says Gilgun. "Which obviously doesn't register on screen, it's just for him because he imagines Greg to be a Lynx man. So he lathers himself in Lynx. It smells like school lockers, horrid."



Jess (Karla Crome) invoking the strange "pointing a gun at people" power...



We love the lighting here.



Yikes, what's Finn done to deserve this?

"IT WAS PROBABLY THE FIRST THING I WROTE WHERE WHAT I IMAGINED IN MY HEAD WAS IMAGINED ON THE SCREEN"

With plenty of loose ends to tie up, Abbey's not the only one we'll get to know better.

"We didn't know a lot about Jess last year, where she's from, why she's on community service, so there's a lot to be discovered," says Karla Crome (Jess). "Her relationship with Abbey takes an interesting turn and they become closer. And with the boys she's got a more bantery friendship. She's relaxed a little and we can get beneath the skin of her more."

For poor Finn, things go from bad to worse. Not only does he get possessed by the devil straight out of the blocks, but his telekinesis has gone craptacular again.

"It doesn't progress, it just gets worse," says Nathan McMullen (Finn). "It's quite fun

to play because at the end of the last series it was like, 'He knows how to use it now!' but in actual fact he doesn't. I think it's more of an instinctive thing that he's still yet to realise, so he still tries too hard."

SO LONG AND THANKS FOR ALL THE QUIPS

Throughout our day on set, there are two words that come up more than any others – "Howard Overman". As *Misfits*' mastermind he's lived with these characters longer than anyone else. So is he sad to see it end?

"It's quite strange because it's been six odd years of my life, but I wouldn't say I'm emotional. Part of it is relief, it's nice to do new projects. I'll probably miss it more in six months than I do now because I've just come out of writing it and writing it is hard and gritty and you're battling to get things done on time.

"I'm very proud of it and it's been a long slog but I've enjoyed writing on it. I think it's made me a better writer. It was probably the first thing I wrote where what I imagined in my head was imagined on the screen, and that as a writer is a constant source of frustration, or satisfaction. You have a perfect version in your head and *Misfits* was probably as close as I'm ever likely to get." **SFX**

Misfits begins on E4 this October.



SEEING DOUBLE

Joe Gilgun on saying farewell to *Misfits*

Will you be sad to see *Misfits* end?

We felt like it's the right time to end it, all of us. None of us have thought to ourselves we could do with doing another year. It's sad, I can't bear the idea of not playing Rudy any more or not being around these dicks [points to castmates]. I had to get over the loss of the first bunch, and now these. It's like people just keep leaving me.

Will the show go out with a bang?

It's awesome. This series is going to be the best series we've ever produced. The producers and writers had an impossible task last year with all new people coming in, because it's a character-based show. We're going back to what *Misfits* was. I struggle learning lines because I'm too busy pissing myself about how ridiculous the situation's going to be on the day.

What's your favourite power this series?

If you're going to have a power you want to be able to knit the future. This woman knits the future and really well. We've got a little gay fella making us jumpers. Probably didn't need to mention he's gay. He's had to make it about 15 times, poor bastard. Every time he's made one we've been like, "What the fuck's that? I'm not wearing that."

Is there anything you won't miss about being Rudy?

My power, it's an absolute curse. Two dudes. I've got to learn two sets of lines, it's a fucking horrible nightmare! That's the bit that I won't miss at all. Filming the double Rudy scenes, that kills me, like. Having said that, this year that's got a lot easier, so on the last year we finally worked out how to film it, my god.



CARRIE ON

Time for prom night again... Tara Bennett risks a pig blood shower to find out about the new version of Stephen King's novel



Getting all prettied up for prom...

THE WORD “REMAKE” might as well be a pejorative these days, given Hollywood’s obsession with taking classic films and ruining them in contemporary wrappers.

And yet for every disappointing *Fright Night* and *Total Recall* retread, a few remakes sneak in and end up relevant and necessary. Hoping to fall in the latter category, director Kimberly Peirce and producer Kevin Misher are fiercely passionate about their contemporary take on Stephen King’s career-launching novel *Carrie*.

Starring Chloë Grace Moretz as the eponymous tortured teen, *Carrie*, Misher contends, is a story that should be dusted off so a new generation can discover its brilliance. “Stephen King writes that the best horror is a reflection of its times. Because it was written in the ‘70s, I don’t think it quite understood the complex society we live in right now and how you can be vitriolic to people in a host of different ways that are very remote. How you treat people, and how they respond, is a great opportunity for a supernatural metaphor to take over. I think what horror does best is a reflection of the anxiety of our time, so rather than just go remake an old movie, here was a piece of material that could potentially speak to an audience.”

addresses on the houses, the day the prom occurs all come from the book.”

Peirce is also proud that their version of *Carrie* gets to be the rare film adaptation about female characters that aren’t just in service of a male protagonist, or dumbed down to serve a demo. “These are certainly very unique characters because you don’t see this many women on screen at once,” Peirce admits. “We go from Julianne to Chloë to Gabriella [Wilde] and Portia [Doubleday] in all these relationships. One of the reasons it probably hits you so profoundly is that it’s unusual to see this kind of story. I felt lucky.”

Luck aside, Peirce and Misher are confident they landed the right female lead, declaring that Chloë Grace Moretz imbues Carrie with a vulnerability that makes her performance timeless yet contemporary. “Have you seen her?” Misher enthuses. “She’s perfect. When we started to mount the movie, asking who was going to be Carrie, there was Chloë Moretz and then everybody else. It wasn’t a lengthy search. She’s an amazing actor and she’s mature beyond her years.”

Peirce is also proud of Julianne Moore’s performance as Carrie’s religious fanatic mother. “Julianne came right in and said ‘I am going to make her a real woman’ and I

Julianne Moore makes Margaret a more empathetic character.



SCREAMING



Director Kimberly Peirce works with Chloë Grace Moretz.

While Brian De Palma’s 1976 adaptation is still revered today, the original film took some liberties with King’s source material and that’s something Peirce explicitly wanted to remedy in her film and screenplay. “I love story structure so I took a page out of the novel to really make it a mother/daughter story. Carrie is your protagonist but the mother/daughter story – beginning, middle to end – is the heart and soul and is what delivers you all the way through it. Carrie is special and you immediately want to protect her and have her realise her dreams. It also has a rich mother who has a history and is bitter. She’s made her own religion and is a believer so she’s super protective of her daughter – yet at the same time harming her and restraining her. They were these titans in that house, fighting.”

“Our version is very respectful of the original, classic book,” adds Misher. “We updated the contemporary ways in which teenagers communicate with one another with texting and iPhones, but we mine the Stephen King book for quite a bit of the story. Our thing was ‘when in doubt, use the original book as the bible’. For instance, there’s a song Julianne Moore sings which is the song King suggests that Margaret White sings to her daughter. Things like the

said ‘great’. Because of that perhaps I made Margaret maybe a little more empathetic, as I tend to do. Like in *Boys Don’t Cry*, the guys who rape and kill Brandon Teena are very loathsome and they were very hard to relate to, but if you didn’t relate to them, you didn’t relate to Brandon. Norman Mailer talks about when you are writing about characters that can be too negative, you have to maintain the authenticity of that negativity but you

“Carrie is your protagonist but the mother/daughter story is the heart and soul and delivers you all the way”

have to give the audience a way in because the audience will just tune out. I would say I love Margaret White and her defensiveness of her daughter. I applied that with the use of religion. I want you to love religion in this movie, and I want you to love Margaret’s love of religion.” Alright... we’ll give it a try. **SFX**

Carrie is released by Sony Pictures on Friday 29 November.



Between them, these two women have a lot of hair.



TAKE SHAT

Living legends don't come larger than William Shatner.
Joseph McCabe gets up close and personal with *the* Captain Kirk

J

AMES TIBERIUS KIRK, AS brought to unforgettable life by William Shatner, just might be the most recognisable character in all of contemporary science fiction. But Shatner's greatest achievement is *another* larger-than-life creation – himself. Actor, writer, director, fearless musical interpreter... “The Shat” has explored as many worlds in real life as his iconic alter ego has via the Enterprise. At a mere 82 years of age, he's just getting started, as *SFX* learns when we sit down to speak with the Canadian-born legend...

You've been asked so many questions over the years about *Star Trek*. Is there anything you wish people would ask you that they haven't?

► Many people put that question to me. They want me to ask a question of myself that I've never answered before [laughs]. No, I think everything's been covered.

Is there an element of the phenomenon that hasn't been considered enough?

► No, over the years pretty much everything has been examined. I don't mind answering the same questions. I can understand your interest and appreciate it.

What do you think of the state of science fiction on television today? How has it changed since *Star Trek*?

► What is on television that's science fiction? I don't think there is any... What's happened is that computer graphics are reaching such an extraordinary point that they've taken over the art and the magic of movies. Great – we can do things in movies just by imagining them. And there's some wonderful artists who bring them to life. That's the magic of science fiction. Having said that, the other part of the magic of science fiction is the word, and the pure imagination about what that is, without seeing the picture. So I'm in the midst of doing a science fiction comic book, which will be part of a programme of filming a comic book and making it come alive. So there's a lot of stuff that I'm brewing that has to do with science fiction.



Sitting back – but this is a man who's done pretty much everything.

You've worked in so many different genres and media. What was your favourite, and what was the most difficult?

► Recently, these last couple of years, I've been out on tour. I opened on Broadway a one-man show called *Shatner's World*. I wrote it and acted in it. An hour and a half by myself. Then I went on tour. I've been to 40 cities and I'll probably go to ten more in January. Every night that I went out there, especially in the beginning, people would stand up and applaud. I was overwhelmed – the feeling of affection that flowed across the footlights was very meaningful to me. That show, because it's my story, is meaningful. So to perform it and to feel that it's been taken the way it was meant to be – getting the laughs and getting the tears, and then ending with these standing ovations – you can understand how extraordinary it was. It was very difficult to do. I had stomach flu or stomach poisoning – I'm not quite sure

– on the opening on Broadway, and I was sick for about a week; in which I couldn't leave the three-foot radius of the bathroom but had to go on stage. It was very difficult. But I kept thinking, “One day I'll get through this and I'll be talking to journalists and telling them about being sick on opening on Broadway.” I was trying to take that historical point of view, and here I am talking about it!

You mentioned you're doing a comic book. Is there any chance you'll ever return to the *Tek World* series?

► That's an interesting question. The *Tek* books that I did were bought by Universal and I made a series called *Tek War*, and four movies of *Tek War*. All this time later, somebody says they'd love to work with me on a comic book, *Tek*. So we try and find who owns *Tek War*. We never could get a decent answer. But I did write a couple of books called *Man O' War*. Which involved the planet Mars and ➔



Still awesome after all these years.

workers who had been there 50 years living underground and had families. Now the young people, the children of those workers, want independence. And they were in rebellion. I then follow the American Revolution on Mars. That's *Man O' War*. So instead, after months of trying to buy *Tek War* back, we're doing comic books on *Man O' War*.

Will we ever see a Director's Cut of *Star Trek V*?

► I haven't been asked to do that.

They did it for Robert Wise and Nicholas Meyer. It's your turn.

► [Laughs] There hasn't been a demand. You and I are the leading advocates.

Would you ever go back and do it?

► My one-line idea was "*Star Trek* goes in search of God." Then I ran into flak – "Whose god? What god? We're not gonna alienate people." Then someone came up with the idea, "Well, what happens if it's an alien who thinks he's God? Then humanity thinks he's the devil by rejecting that he's God." In order to get that movie made, I agreed to it, and that was a compromise. The difference between making a compromise and being political, or standing on your standards, where do you do that? The editor says, "Cut that line." And you say, "But that's my whole story." "I'm sorry, you gotta get rid of those words." Do you say, "No, I'm not gonna do it"? Do you say, "Okay, I'll do it"? Making compromises and political judgments, or standing on our standards, all our lives, is that. How do you make those decisions? That's what I had to learn on *Star Trek V*, with \$30 million. So it was fairly public.

You've brought Kirk back in *Trek* books.

Do these books give you the freedom to do other things? Do you enjoy writing them?

► A lot of the *Star Trek* books that I wrote are autobiographical. Things that happened to me I laid on Kirk. The setting was futuristic, that was easy to do. The indigenous story came out of my experience.

"I HAD TO MAKE COMPROMISES TO GET *STAR TREK V* MADE, WITH \$30 MILLION. SO IT WAS FAIRLY PUBLIC"

Will you write any more of them?

► They haven't asked me. I think that phase is over, I would imagine.

What upcoming projects are you most excited about?

► I've got a wonderful movie script, called *The Shiva Club*. I've got a wonderful reality show concept that I want to do. This podcasting that I'm doing, called *Brown Bag Winetasting*, can lead to all kinds of things. The artistry of taste, if you will, is really intriguing. I mean, why does a wine explode in your mouth and then have subtle tones and then an aftertaste? So I got Dave Koz, the saxophonist, a great musician, and I did a *Brown Bag Winetasting* with him. I said, "I don't want to hear about vanilla and blueberry overtones. I want to hear what you think of this wine with a saxophone." He takes a saxophone and he plays the taste of the wine. That's the kind of thing I'm doing.

How are you able to do so many projects?

► I get up early [laughs].

What was the best day of your life?

► The best day of my life was going 150 feet down in a submarine to see the vegetation and the animal life. That was a great day... I saw a girl in a bikini, my wife. I saw a snake. I saw a shark. I saw sea cucumbers. And I saw either a manta ray or a stingray.

If you could give yourself any role in the new *Star Wars* movie, what would it be?

► *Star Wars*? The lead! Harrison Ford – progressed [laughs]. **SFX**

BAT-SHAT CRAZY!

Face it: William Shatner's at his finest (and funniest) when he goes a little nuts...



"Rocket Man"

► Though Shatner's best-known recordings are on his 1968 spoken-word album *The Transformed Man* – including "Lucy In The Sky with Diamonds" and "Mr Tambourine Man" – his finest musical moment is his live rendition of "Rocket Man" at the 1978 Science Fiction Film Awards.

Get A Life!

► With *Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home* a hit at the box office, Shatner bit the hand that fed him. On the 1986 Christmas episode of *Saturday Night Live* he appeared as himself, begging Trekkies to move out of their "parents' basements".

The Negotiator

► In recent years, Shatner has starred as "The Negotiator" in a series of commercials for Priceline.com, parodying everything from *Point Break* to POW escape movies; often joined by Leonard Nimoy and *The Big Bang Theory*'s Kaley Cuoco.



Circus Of The Stars

► In 1981, Shatner appeared on the annual TV special *Circus Of The Stars*. After smashing through five flaming boards with his bare hand, Sensei Shat used a samurai sword to slice a watermelon atop a very brave man's bare stomach.

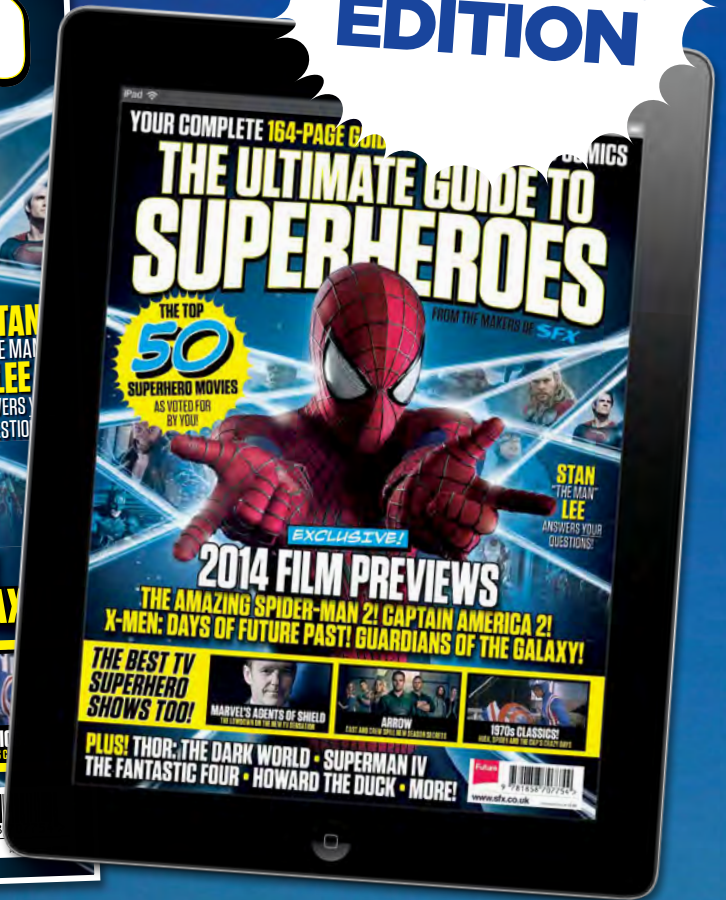
"Common People"

► Shatner's musical comeback came in 2004 with the Ben Folds-produced album *Has Been*, the highlight of which is a cover of Pulp's "Common People". Shat (backed by Joe Jackson) screaming "dance and drink and screw" in disgust is uncommonly wonderful.

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Lavie Tidhar

The Israeli writer tells us why his new book is a literary take on superheroes...

WORDS BY JONATHAN WRIGHT PORTRAIT BY KEVIN NIXON

There can be upsides to being stuck in transit. A couple of years back, the Israeli writer Lavie Tidhar was preparing to move to the UK, travelling from his homeland, but had to take a dogleg through South Africa, where he lived as a teenager, to sort some paperwork. He ended up staying for two months.

"During that time, I'm talking to a friend, who's a film producer in the UK," remembers Tidhar, "and kind of just as a throwaway comment, she said, 'We've been looking to make a British superhero film, but we've never found the right script for it.'"

Of course not, Tidhar responded by email, because the major superheroes were the invention of Jewish émigrés to the USA, often people writing against a background of trauma caused by displacement, anti-Semitism and the horrors of World War Two. "So

I was writing all that stuff, which she apparently never received, and I thought, 'You know what, that's not a bad idea. That's kind of interesting, there's something there...'"

Thus, at least in embryonic form was born Tidhar's new novel, *The Violent Century*, which advance proofs pitch as John le Carré meets *The Incredibles*. It's a novel that charts the story of the mid-late 20th century through the eyes of superheroes, principally understated Brit spooks Oblivion and Fogg, who leave the fancy costumes and grandstanding to their foreign, especially American, counterparts. The duo's superpowers? Erm, respectively sending stuff to oblivion and creating fog.

If that makes the novel sound slight, it's not. Like Michael Chabon's *The Amazing Adventures Of Kavalier & Clay*, the only obvious precursor, it's both a hugely entertaining yet serious novel, a treatise on heroism and a love story too. Curiously, though, it wasn't initially written

as a novel. Those two months in South Africa were spent writing a screenplay, but when Tidhar's producer friend saw the script, she pointed out he'd written "a big Hollywood film" that was unlikely to get funding.

"She said, 'Why don't you try to write the book first and if we have the book as a property, it might be easier to sell the film,' which is a very film person thing to say, isn't it?" remembers Tidhar.

What lay ahead was "a lot of rewriting and lots of different drafts" as Tidhar worked on the novel. "I've never had to put that much work into crafting a book," he says. Moreover, this was work done at what Tidhar – whom, it might be noted, would most likely be Eeyore if he were cast in a production of *Winnie-the-Pooh* – remembers as a personal nadir.

As Tidhar wrote *The Violent Century*, he was broke. His contract with Angry Robot, which published his Bookman Histories trilogy, was ending. The English winter was cold. Another novel had stalled. *Osama*, although picked up by independent press PS Publishing, had previously been "rejected by about 40-50 publishers". His career, Tidhar sometimes suspected, might be over before it had really begun.

Instead, *Osama*, which tells the story of a PI hunting for a pulp fiction writer behind books about vigilante hero Osama Bin Laden, got rave reviews. Moreover, it won the 2012 World Fantasy Award. Returning from the ceremony in Toronto, Tidhar was suddenly in demand. With *Violent Century* finished, he had a book to sell too.

Life, it appears, has got much better since. Not only has there been another book via PS, a science fiction tale entitled *The Martian Sands*, but Tidhar has been commissioned to write a screenplay and he's been writing a comic for Titan. *Adler*, with art by Paul McCaffrey, features Irene Adler, "the woman" in the Sherlock Holmes story "A Scandal In Bohemia". It's a project inspired by Tidhar's unhappiness with the way recent Holmes adaptations have treated Adler, to quote the writer's blog, "as a sort of Sherlock/Moriarty plaything". He adds: "I've really wanted to do comics for a long time."

This partly reflects a fascination with "adaptation, how you take things and make them into other things". Indeed, when he thought it would take a while to sell *Violent Century*, he anticipated it being a comic first, and Tidhar and McCaffrey pitched the idea.

Nevertheless, it's the novels that form the serious kernel of Tidhar's writing. Both *Violent Century* and *Martian Sands*, for example, deal with the Holocaust. "I'm not just writing on this as pulp fiction," Tidhar says, as he considers how chapters set in Transylvania reflect his own family history, adding, "You can't just treat [this history] like cheap fiction or a comic book, in the derogatory way that people refer to comic books, you have to treat it with the weight it deserves."

However, he's already thinking about moving on. "The next book I'm hoping will be my final engagement with the Holocaust and World War Two for a while," he says, adding that it's "a hard-boiled, noir novel" and "a risky book". Why risky? He tells *SFX* the pitch for a book provisionally entitled *The Drummer*, which we have to promise not to share and, even as the words brilliantly tasteless spring to mind, we can only agree that risky sounds an accurate assessment. **SFX**

The Violent Century is published by Hodder & Stoughton on Thursday 24 October.



BIODATA

- **OCCUPATION:** Novelist
- **BORN:** 1976
- **FROM:** Israel
- **GREATEST HITS:** *Osama*, which won the 2012 World Fantasy Award, is the best known of Tidhar's books to date.
- **RANDOM FACT:** Tidhar is an administrator at the World SF Travel Fund, which aims to help international genre writers "travel to a major genre event".





HOLDING

THE

OUT FOR IR

Things are going to get much more superhero-ey on sharp-shooting adventure drama *Arrow*, Joseph McCabe discovers

FOR ALL ITS CENSOR-SKIRTING ANTIHERO action, *Arrow*'s greatest accomplishment in its launch season was discovering something no live-action superhero TV show ever had – how to tell both an origin story (the foundation of every great comic-book champion) *and* an ongoing tale of adventure. Anyone unfamiliar with Green Arrow experienced, in an ongoing string of flashback scenes, the island exile that moulded the crimefighter, while comic fans – still smarting from ten years of waiting for Clark Kent to don cape on *Smallville* – wept with joy at the sight of billionaire playboy Oliver Queen (as played by Stephen Amell) clutching quiver and bow in episode one. ➔



SMOAKIN' HOT

Emily Bett Rickards is the brains behind Team Arrow...

► **From what we've seen of season two, Felicity Smoak appears more confident...**

She's evolving. She now knows the price of justice. That's helping her help Arrow, and makes us all a team. Spending time with people instead of computers is also making her confident. She gets to interact with new characters. She does a lot of crazy things in the first three episodes. She's souped up the lair, it's becoming more of a superhero cave. And the trick arrows are coming.

► **She's also souped up her look.**

She has a different title in Queen Consolidated. Her professional attire's changed a little bit, but we're keeping a quirky fun vibe - I'm fighting to keep the pony tail. She's not so much zany any more, she's quirky chic. But it's getting a little more glamorous. Maybe she's just trying harder to allure Oliver [laughs].

► **Felicity was created for one episode yet now she's a regular. Why do you think she's connected with fans?**

She's a regular person with extreme knowledge and extreme IQ, but she's socially awkward. Her ability to not give up and to keep trying to be who she wants to be is really appealing, as is her honesty and her vulnerability. I'm just glad that people relate to her. Because in that first episode, I really related to her. I just liked the way she handled that first contact - or *didn't* handle that first contact [laughs] - with Oliver.

► **If you could invent a trick arrow, what would it do?**

I don't know why this comes into my mind first, but a taser arrow would be really cool. Also an arrow that would create disco lights wouldn't be bad for parties. But that'd probably not be so helpful to the vigilante.



Even those bagels aren't helping here.

Much of the credit for Arrow's hit-the-ground-running approach can be given to executive producers Marc Guggenheim and Andrew Kreisberg, who kept the story moving at a whirlwind pace through 23 first-season episodes. As the pair tells *SFX*, things aren't about to slow down for Oliver and friends in year two.

"There may be an expectation," says Guggenheim, in the midst of shooting the season's fifth episode, "because we're now an established show and it looks like we're going to be on for several years, that maybe we'll slow the storytelling down. Nothing could be further from the truth. If anything, it feels like we're moving even faster than we were last year. There are a lot of things we're doing in the first seven episodes that we thought we wouldn't be doing until the back half of the year. Everything's frontloaded. Like last year we have an overarching game plan and know what the end of the season is, both on the island and in the present day. But we're exploding bombs much sooner than last year."

"With the flashbacks this season," explains Kreisberg, "we've certainly kicked it up a notch on the island. We haven't been shy about the fact that we didn't fully know what we were going to do with the island last year. We didn't really pull it together until a third of the way through the season, when we really started to figure out what kinds of stories we could tell and how to keep the momentum going. But this season we have a very clear idea of what's going to be happening on the island, and it's going to tie into what's happening in the present day a lot more directly. That will make the flashbacks even more exciting than they were last season."

THE NAME GAME

Throughout most of his first year, Oliver - while exacting vengeance against his late father's enemies - prowled Starling City without a proper superheroic moniker. But this season, the producers assure us, he'll earn a name befitting his new mission.

"Last season we didn't really give much thought to having a name," says Kreisberg.

"He was a nameless faceless vigilante in the shadows crossing names out of a book. But the city really needs a saviour. It needs somebody to help it. In order to do that he needs to be a little bit more out in the open. So this season he's actually going to let people call him the Arrow. We've already said that the series was the evolution of Oliver Queen from vigilante to Green Arrow. So he started as the vigilante and now he's slowly making his way to being the Arrow. This arc will one day in the series take him to being the Green Arrow."

In his second year, Oliver will find himself relying increasingly on his allies, including lady love Laurel Lance (Katie Cassidy).

"One of the things we've done in season two," says Guggenheim, "is allowed the supporting characters to really shine. Last year we would have multiple storylines that sometimes felt siloed off from whatever the Arrow's story of the week was. The result was that secondary characters would sometimes get ghettoised in their storylines. This year we're taking a much more cohesive approach to breaking story. As a result, the entire cast has better stories, and stories that relate more to the overarching plot of any given episode."

Team Arrow will continue to share Oliver's mission, so expect to learn more about girl Friday Felicity (Emily Bett Rickards) and right-hand-man Diggle (David Ramsey).

"In episode six we learn something pretty surprising about Diggle's past," teases Guggenheim. "In season two we also want to explore Felicity's history. We don't know that much about her, apart from the fact that



Oliver Queen and Felicity Smoak model this season's "business casual" wear.

“One of the fun things that we do in the show is play with the comic-book fans’ expectations”

she's really good with computers and socially awkward. So it's about rounding out those characters' lives and backstories in a way that brings them closer to being on a par with Laurel and Quentin Lance, where we know much more about their backstories. We know what went on with them in the five years that Oliver was on the island, dealing with Sara's death and the dissolution of the Lance marriage. We want to put Diggle and Felicity on a little bit more of an even playing field in terms of rounding out their backstories. One of the things that's nice about having 23 episodes is we've got a nice big canvas to paint on.”

NEW ADVERSARIES

That canvas allows for one of this season's most intriguing additions – fan-favourite actress Summer Glau as Ollie's business rival Isabel Rochev.

“Summer and Kevin Alejandro both play very important figures in season two, and they're both antagonists of Oliver, albeit in different ways. What's fun about them is they're antagonists to Oliver, not antagonists to the Arrow. Which again is a new dimension to the show – we didn't really do that last year. But Oliver is finding himself in people's crosshairs more in season two than he ever did in season one.”

Another new resident in Starling City is the show's first Black Canary (actress-dancer Caity Lotz), aka Sara Lance, Laurel's long-thought-dead sister (played by Jacqueline MacInnes Wood in the show's pilot), with whom Oliver was having an affair before his exile.

“One of the fun things that we do in the show is play with the comic-book fans' expectations. For example, the first Green Arrow on our show wasn't Oliver Queen, it was Yao Fei. I think people may be surprised to see who is wearing the green hood in episode one of season two. And it's fun to bring the Black Canary, the sort of proto version, onto the show. Obviously Black Canary is a very important character in the Green Arrow mythos. Caity's a wonderful person and a wonderful actress. She also can really kick butt very well.”

Still waiting in the wings is another DC Comics mainstay – a certain scarlet speedster, who will appear on *Arrow* before getting his own show...

“The Flash will have a three-episode appearance,” states Kreisberg, well aware of the challenge in placing such a fantastic, seminal comics figure in Oliver's gritty milieu. “Our approach to it is ‘What would happen in reality if something like this were to occur?’ We will try to keep it as grounded in science as we can. Obviously the Flash show will feel different from the *Arrow* show, but we want people to feel it takes place on the same planet.

“People will just have to take the ride with us,” says the producer. “But I promise it is the Flash. He won't just be wearing a red hoodie.” **SFX**

Arrow's second season starts on Sky1 on Monday 21 October.



River Tam – or is that Cameron Phillips? – is back for more.

GREEN ARROW'S CRAZIEST ARROWS

In his 72-year history, the Emerald Archer's arsenal wasn't always terribly dignified...

THE BOXING GLOVE ARROW

The most infamous of GA's arrows. For when he can't decide between long and short-range combat.



THE CHIMNEY SWEEP ARROW

“Chim chiminey, chim chiminey, chim chim cher-ee. When you're with GA, you're in mad company...”

THE MUMMY ARROW

For Egyptology buffs. The tip of this arrow – which cocoons its target – resembles an ancient Egyptian coffin.



THE TUMBLEWEED ARROW

Why throw a smoke grenade when you can stir up any dust that'll hopefully be in the area?

THE BABY RATTLE ARROW

The answer to that eternal question, “What does one do to bring an infant to justice?”



PENNY DREADFUL




What's happening in the world of horror movies this month...



This issue I've been murdered and replaced by an evil robot. Either that, or *Insidious: Chapter 2* really is terrible and *Curse Of Chucky* really is good. Also cannibals are beautiful in *We Are*


What We Are, I've chosen my favourite film of the year already without having actually seen it, and something that should have been good but I can't talk about *isn't* my favourite film of the year...

DOUBLE TROUBLE

 *Insidious: Chapter 2* was a massive disappointment then. I went to see it in a double-bill with the first *Insidious* which only emphasised how still-great the first one is and how not-flawless James Wan is. Okay, this is going to make a boat-load of money but while *Insidious* seemed to mark the start of a mini-mainstream horror new age, *Insidious 2* might just have put a lid on it. First off it's not scary. I like creepy dolls, loud noises and *Carnival Of Souls* as much as the next girl but this was sloppy and unoriginal and ripped off *The Shining* shamelessly (with a bit of *Poltergeist 2*, *Paranormal Activity 2* and some random time travel slung in). It does have more gags, it's true, but basically it's lazy,

repetitive and self-indulgent and it doesn't need to be – *Insidious 2* does not want for talent. Nor is it lacking budget. Nor are Wan and co-writer Leigh Whannell trapped in a studio system that stifles their creativity. There's no excuse (except they know what makes money). So please, no more *Insidiae* (*Insidioues?* *Insidiodes?*) – like with arms trading, drug trafficking and One Direction, just because you can make a lot of money from something, doesn't mean you should.

LITTLE DARLING

 A nice surprise, on the other hand: *Curse Of Chucky*. I know. I can't quite believe I'm saying this either. The sixth part in the *Child's Play* franchise, out at the end of October, some


Curse Of Chucky actually is something to smile about.

DREADFUL OLD MOVIE

"It's *The Birds* with worms," according to moustachioed horror maven Kim Newman on the DVD extras of Jeff Lieberman's nature-nasty *Squirm*, where an electrical malfunction in a small town causes millions of annelids to attack. Very wriggly, slightly silly, with some fab setpieces, it's worth checking out for creature feature completists but should be avoided by spaghetti phobics.


25 years after the first one and directed by original screenwriter Don Mancini, has some great shocks and a real sense of fun. Fiona Dourif (daughter of Chucky voice Brad Dourif) is fab as the disabled woman sent a Chucky doll which proceeds to terrorise her and her messed up extended family. Rather than just repeating the tropes of the series, *Curse* plays with them – there are nods and acknowledgements, gags and cameos (it's worth sticking around for a post-credits sting) – it's funny, pacey and there's some fine gore. Also keep an eye out for the excellent dinner party scene involving poisoned chilli – you think you know what's going to happen, but you don't...

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

 More disgusting dinners in *We Are What We Are*, out on 25 October – Jim Mickle's (*Stake Land*, *Mulberry Street*) revision of 2010's Mexican cannibal drama. This is how a remake should be

done. While it's loosely based around the same story – the head of a family of cannibals dies, leaving the others to reflect on how they'll carry on living – Mickle's version is standalone. The location is rural not urban, the family structure is focused on the women rather than the men and, crucially, the subtext is entirely different: the personal not the political. Both films are good; Mickle's is drenched in rain-soaked melancholy, with amazing performances all round. It's slow (both versions are) but it's also sad and shocking. Gil Kenan (who's just cast Sam Rockwell in the *Poltergeist* redo), Rie Rasmussen (who's just signed up for a remake of Cronenberg's *Shivers*), Lee Shipman and Bryan McGreevy (who are working on a new adap of *The Island Of Doctor Moreau*) should take note!


A BODY TO BE PROUD OF

 Twisty Spanish gem *The Body*, from *Julia's Eyes* writer




Oriol Paulo, is out now on DVD. *The Orphanage/Julia's Eyes* star Belen Rueda plays the wealthy pharmaceuticals magnate offed by her younger husband so he can be with his lover. Only now the body's disappeared... Occasionally implausible but so tightly scripted and frantically paced you barely notice, it's a sharp horror thriller full of surprises. It reminded me most of *Les Diaboliques*, though for those who've seen Clouzot's excellent revenge tale: don't assume *The Body* has a similar set of twists. But don't assume it doesn't... Also: Belen Rueda is awesome. A beautiful genre star who's in her late forties; you just don't get roles like that for women in US or UK horror.

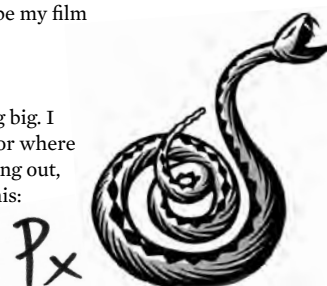
GOOD LOOKING GLASS

 In 2006 I reviewed a half-hour short horror called *Oculus*. Made for \$1,000, set in a white room containing one man and one mirror, it was wonderful – tense, economic and

really, really frightening. Director Mike Flanagan went on to make *Absentia*, which I also raved about, and now his full-length feature of *Oculus*, inspired by the short, has premiered in Toronto. And apparently it's brilliant. Starring Karen Gillan and Katee Sackoff, the film weaves dual storylines together as a woman investigates a murder her brother has been blamed for which she believes was caused by a haunted mirror. No news on a UK release yet but I'm going to throw this out frivolously: this is probably going to be my film of the year.

SNEAK PEEK

 I've seen something big. I can't say what it is or where I saw it or when it's coming out, so I'm just going to say this: it's a bit disappointing because it's miscast. That is all.



DREADFUL NIGHT IN

We Are What We Are and *Curse Of Chucky* both contain classy poisoning scenes – to celebrate, let's revisit top toxin moments!

6pm

► Assemble dry toast and water, or copious amounts of hard liquor (if you're going to vom anyway...).

6.30pm

THE SIXTH SENSE

M Night Shyamalan, 1999

► A brilliant multi-layered movie that's not all about the twist. Take the horrific reveal scene for fragile, sick (dead) little Mischa Barton's Kyra – a videotape left to record inadvertently as her Munchausen-by-proxy sufferer mother poisons her food.



8.20pm

THE YOUNG POISONER'S HANDBOOK

Benjamin Ross, 1995

► Blackly comic loose biopic of the real case of Graham Young, who poisoned family members and later, co-workers, using Thallium.



10pm

FLOWERS IN THE ATTIC

Jeffrey Bloom, 1987

► Four kids are locked in an attic in a mansion by their mother to hide them from their dying grandfather. It slowly transpires that their formerly desperate and sympathetic mother is actually poisoning them with arsenic mixed with sugar on cookies she brings them.



11.40pm

PSYCHO IV

Mick Garris, 1990

► *Masters Of Horror* creator Mick Garris's TV movie prequel/sequel reveals how Norman Bates killed his mum and her boyfriend using poisoned iced tea. An alternative history particularly of note if you're watching *Bates Motel*.



1.20am

► Does my breathing sound weird? Was that spot there before? Banish paranoia and have a healing sleep. Dreadful dreams!



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★★★★★ Superb ★★★★★ Good ★★★ Average ★★ Poor ★ Terrible

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American Horror Story: Asylum

Putting the sick into the '60s in season two

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George Clooney and Sandra Bullock have a spaceflight to remember in one of the films of the year.



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Zombies go big budget and take over the planet. Luckily Brad Pitt's on hand to save us all.



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Doctor Sleep

Stephen King reveals what happened to little Danny Torrance in his long-awaited sequel to *The Shining*.

Gravity

Trouble on the Hubble



★★★★★

Release Date: 8 November

12A | 91 minutes

Distributor: Warner Bros

Director: Alfonso Cuarón

Cast: Sandra Bullock, George Clooney

SPECIAL EFFECTS CINEMA

has always had the rollercoaster capacity to dazzle and delight, but the astonishing *Gravity* is a rare example of processor-powered filmmaking that will snatch the air from your lungs and leave you gasping for breath.

"Nerve-shredding" doesn't cover it. *Gravity* is the most stressful 90 minutes you're ever likely to spend in a stranger-filled room without a car battery clamped to your genitals. The film's taut running time leaves no room for flab, its streamlined storytelling no plotoles to pick apart, and its technical brilliance ensures no immersion-breaking trips to uncanny valley. There's just you, the void and the teeth-clenching struggle for survival.

Alfonso Cuarón's space-set thriller marks the long overdue return of the *Prisoner Of Azkaban* director to the big screen after 2006's superb *Children Of Men*. It's as much science fact as it is science fiction, presenting a plausible vision of a routine Hubble Telescope upgrade that meets disaster. In fact, the closest it comes to stepping outside its hard SF boundaries is a cameo by Looney Tunes's Marvin the Martian (for more on him, see right).

In a bravura opening shot that lasts around 15 minutes before the

first cut, we're introduced to veteran pilot Matt Kowalsky (George Clooney) and rookie engineer Ryan Stone (Sandra Bullock), the former on his last shuttle mission, the latter on her first. As Stone struggles to simply keep dinner down while performing her duties in zero-g, Kowalsky floats around with the aid of a jetpack, blaring tinny country and western over his headset and regaling mission control with stories of love lost, like some rakish space raconteur.

It's a breezy, genuinely joyous sequence, filled with moments of such mesmerising beauty that it's only when Clooney's dulcet tones come through the speakers and not David Attenborough's that you remember this isn't the BBC's latest tour de force doc.

The jocular mood turns fraught on a pinhead – a message from mission control that a Russian satellite has exploded, sending a debris field Hubble's way at thousands of miles per hour. From this moment on *Gravity* is relentless, an action movie where the ruthless realities of space travel and a seemingly endless array of unpredictable calamities are the enemy, like *Speed* meets *Apollo 13*.

Not that Cuarón doesn't understand the virtues of pacing. Moments of calm amidst the interstellar storm offer blessed relief from the unbearable tension and an opportunity for Cuarón and his screenwriter son Jonás to build on Stone's tragic past. She's a woman with little to live for, but one who finds hope in the face of certain death. Bullock is the heart of the film and seriously impresses in a role that demands a great deal of her, both physically and emotionally; her performance is all the more remarkable when you remember she's often playing against nothing other than a greenscreen. Clooney



has an easier job, with a part that plays on his effortless charm to great effect. But the real magic of *Gravity* is the technical wizardry that went on behind the scenes.

The entire film is a masterclass in how-the-heck-did-they-do-that magnificence. Visual effects integrate with live-action elements (often just the actors' faces) seamlessly. Single shots last for a dozen minutes at a time, the camera completely free to float around the vast expanse of space and capture the action from any angle, even inside the astronauts' helmets. It makes *Children Of Men*'s seven-minute, single-take battle

sequence seem like basic training in comparison. And yet so much visual trickery goes unnoticed, because you don't realise it's an effect in the first place. There isn't a single moment where a CG element doesn't completely convince. Cuarón spent more than four years researching the accuracy of the film's physics, down to the way bodies react to other bodies in the thermosphere. After watching *Gravity* you'll feel like you had the best seats in the house for the worst day in the history of space travel.

As if being one of the most visually accomplished cinematic spectacles

Gravity astounds and terrifies in equal measure



since *Avatar* wasn't enough, *Gravity* also boasts truly exceptional sound design. Before the action even begins we're assaulted with an opening salvo of Steven Price's menacing score, a wall of noise that builds to agonising levels before cutting to complete silence. Just as Cuarón paces his heartstopping ordeal perfectly, Price, sound supervisor Chris Munro and sound designer Glenn Freemantle make smart use of stillness on the soundtrack, adhering to the laws of physics 375 miles above the Earth's surface, so that often all we hear are panicked breaths over the radio. When Kowalsky instructs Stone to slow her breathing as she spins off towards deep

space, you can't help but follow his advice too.

Unsurprisingly for a film so technically accomplished the (post-production) 3D is incredibly strong, easily the best we've seen since James Cameron journeyed to Pandora. Space stations explode in a shower of shrapnel, unlikely infernos rage through circular corridors and NASA's finest are tossed around every axis like human swingballs. If you're lucky enough to live near a cinema equipped with Dolby Atmos, where sound is emitted from 64 speakers covering the walls and ceiling (currently in the UK that's

only the Empire, Leicester Square), sensory overload is a very real danger.

Gravity is an awe-inspiring achievement, a towering slice of cinematic splendour that astounds and terrifies in equal measure. It doesn't aspire to narrative complexity, but is one of the most visually extraordinary films ever committed to the screen, setting a new benchmark for photo-realistic special effects. Put simply, it's one of the greatest space films ever made.

Jordan Farley

? Ed Harris voices NASA mission control – a role he was Oscar nominated for in *Apollo 13*.

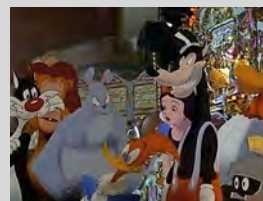
Marvin The Martian

More of the cartoon
character's cameos



CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND

► A little over an hour into *Close Encounters*, Richard Dreyfuss's Roy Neary has an epiphany, finally realising that the mystery shape he's been obsessively sculpting is Devils Tower. While this happens, in the background his young daughter is watching Marvin the Martian and Daffy Duck face off in 1953 toon *Duck Dodgers In The 24½th Century*.



WHO FRAMED ROGER RABBIT

► Marvin is just one of a whole crowd of well-known toons who turn up at the Acme Factory at the end of this 1988 movie, to celebrate Bob Hoskins's PI Eddie Valiant defeating the villainous Judge Doom.



THE SIMPSONS

► Season eight episode "The Springfield Files", in which Homer believes he's seen an alien, is best remembered for its guest star roles for a trio of SF greats: Leonard Nimoy, plus David Duchovny and Gillian Anderson – the latter duo in character as Mulder and Scully. Marvin features in a cheeky police line-up scene, which also features unauthorised cameos by Chewbacca, '80s puppet ALF, and Gort, the giant robot from *The Day The Earth Stood Still*.

FUTURAMA

► Okay, so it's only a deleted scene, but we're counting it! "That Darn Katz!", a season six episode about mind-controlling felines, sees Amy presenting her doctoral thesis at Mars University; at one point, she passes Marvin in a corridor.

Cloudy With A Chance Of Meatballs 2

Ready for seconds?

★★★★★

Release Date: 25 October

U | 95 minutes

Distributor: Sony

Director: Kris Pearn, Cody Cameron

Cast: Bill Hader, Anna Faris, Will Forte, Andy Samberg, Terry Crews

THE FIRST CLOUDY WITH

A Chance Of Meatballs was a surprise – and surprisingly delightful – hit back in 2009, so naturally here comes a second helping. This one isn't quite as fully cooked, but it's a fun sequel that dares do a few different things.

After a quick prologue outlining the plot so far, we're thrown into an adventure that picks up the story minutes after the first film. Inventor Flint Lockwood (Bill Hader) is approached by his hero, the Richard Branson/Steve Jobs-alike corporate genius Chester V (Will Forte), and sent on a mission to finally switch off his food-generating device, which has begun creating sentient food/animal hybrids.



And Barry hated raspberries even more!

So Flint, along with friends such as weather girl Sam Sparks (Anna Faris), dad Tim (James Caan) and simian Steve (Neil Patrick Harris), must journey back to his overwhelmed home island of Swallow Falls and deal with living strawberries, Watermelophants, Tacodiles and the like. It's mostly a riff on *Jurassic Park*, with the "Foodimals" on the rampage and the chance for more food-related puns than you can shake a spoon at.

Most of the enjoyable *Cloudy* spirit is in place here, though the film gets very preachy at times and may be too zany for its own good. But though it skews even younger than the original, it'll still satisfy those who ate up the first course.

James White

? The film features 39 "Foodanimals", including mosquitoasts, bananostriches, meatbalruses and watermelophants.

The Wolf Children

We're lycan this anime

★★★★★

Release Date: 25 October

2012 | 117 minutes

Distributor: Manga Entertainment

Director: Mamoru Hosoda

Cast: Aoi Miyazaki, Takao Osawa, Bunta Sugawara

RECENTLY, SPIRITED

Away director Hayao Miyazaki announced that he was retiring from filmmaking. But for reassurance that there are still wonderful non-CG cartoon fantasies being made, check out this gem by Mamoru Hosoda, director of *Summer Wars* and *The Girl Who Leapt Through Time*.

His new film is a delightful family drama where werewolf kids get hairy on cue. Forget gypsy curses, full moons or silver bullets. This is a film about everyday life, treating werewolves much as Miyazaki did witches in his classic *Kiki's Delivery Service*.

An optimistic woman student encounters a strange young man at her college. Their friendship deepens until he shyly reveals he's a Wolfman. If you're thinking *Twilight*, don't; it's much more



After three straight days, Carol's arms knacked.

underplayed. Soon the couple has two adorable kids who've inherited their dad's powers. But then something terrible happens...

There's no spectacular move into fantasy, just a bit of nature-magic later on. This is a character piece with laughs, joy and tears, mostly set around mysterious mountains. While it's narrated as a memoir by the wolf-daughter, the film's centre is her mother (this easily beats Pixar's *Brave* as a celebration of motherhood). There's also a grumpy grandpa who bears a remarkable resemblance to Clint Eastwood.

The film's mature for tots, with a moment of arguable bestiality (!), but for anyone who loves charming, original storytelling, it's a must.

Andrew Osmond

? *Wolf Children* is being released in both dubbed and subtitled prints – check with your cinema which version they're showing.

With jobs scarce, Eileen had to become an incense holder.



The Haunting In Connecticut 2: Ghosts Of Georgia

Dead generic

★★★★★

Release Date: 31 October

15 | 101 minutes

Distributor: Lionsgate

Director: Tom Elkins

Cast: Abigail Spencer, Emily Alyn Lind, Chad Michael Murray, Grant James, Katee Sackhoff

SKELETONS, GHOSTS,

maggots, roaches, rotting corpses, a haunted house, an incredulous parent, and even an exorcism... the horror tropes come thick and fast in *The Haunting In Connecticut 2: Ghosts Of Georgia*. A "sequel" to 2009's *The Haunting In Connecticut* (hardly), "based on a true story" (barely), it's so desperate to tick tried and tested genre boxes that it feels like someone's lobbing the straight-to-DVD bin in Asda at you.

Inspired by the account of child "psychic" Heidi Wyrick, who claimed she could see the ghost of an old man, *Ghosts Of Georgia* builds in a vaguely interesting backstory of the "Underground Railroad" used by 19th century slaves to escape to free states.

The directorial debut of editor Tom Elkins, the film relies heavily on CGI jump scares, with the occasional inventive (but nonsensical) setpiece. But an over-emphasis on exposition and the repetitious bludgeoning of "now you see me now you don't" spectres mean it's completely devoid of tension.

BSG's Katee Sackoff gives an energetic performance as Heidi's free-spirited but irresponsible aunt Joyce, but the staunch refusal of Heidi's mother (Abigail Spencer) to accept that her nipper is fraternising with the undead is infuriating. Horror by numbers that's less than the sum of its parts.

Rosie Fletcher

? Heidi Wyrick's story's already been filmed, as TV doc *A Haunting In Georgia*. There's also a book about it – *The Veil*.

coming soon

25 OCTOBER

ENDER'S GAME Hugo's Asa Butterfield plays Ender, a boy being trained to fight the insectoid "Formics", in this adaptation of Orson Scott Card's 1985 novel.

A MAGNIFICENT HAUNTING

This Italian comedy about a fella who moves into a haunted apartment has had its release date pushed back since we reviewed it in *SFX* 240.

30 OCTOBER

THOR: THE DARK WORLD Chris Hemsworth's Asgardian prince heads to London.

1 NOVEMBER

NOSFERATU THE VAMPIRE

A reissue of Werner Herzog's 1979 remake of silent classic *Nosferatu*. Klaus Kinski plays Dracula.

21 NOVEMBER

THE HUNGER GAMES: CATCHING FIRE

Jennifer Lawrence's Katniss competes against the winners of the previous 24 Hunger Games in the latest Suzanne Collins adap.

29 NOVEMBER

CARRIE Hit-Girl Chloë Grace Moretz stars in the new movie of the Stephen King novel about a girl with telekinetic powers.

6 DECEMBER

FROZEN A young royal goes on a quest to end an eternal winter in this Disney animation, based on the Hans Christian Andersen story "The Snow Queen".

13 DECEMBER

THE HOBBIT: THE DESOLATION OF SMAUG Bilbo Baggins and co continue their journey in the second in the series.

THE INNOCENTS A reissue of the classic 1961 gothic horror based on the Henry James novella *The Turn Of The Screw*.

20 DECEMBER

MOSHI MONSTERS: THE MOVIE

The online kids' entertainment brand hits the big screen.

26 DECEMBER

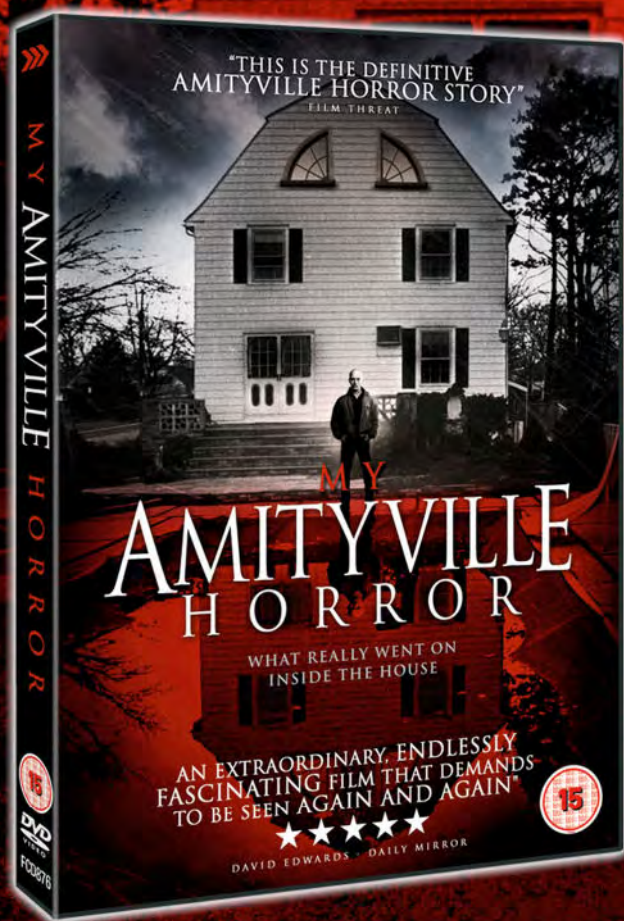
47 RONIN Keanu Reeves stars in this fantasy action film about a group of 18th century samurai.

3 JANUARY

PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE MARKED ONES This spinoff from the found-footage franchise has a Catholic theme and a Latino cast.

MY AMITYVILLE HORROR

WHAT REALLY WENT ON INSIDE THE HOUSE



DAVID EDWARDS
DAILY MIRROR



"THIS IS THE
DEFINITIVE AMITYVILLE
HORROR STORY"

FILM THREAT

"FASCINATING"

JOBLO

"RIVETING"

INDIEWIRE

ON DVD OCT 28TH

ARROW



FILMS

World War Z

Z is for zombies

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

Release Date: 21 October

2013 | 15 | 123 minutes | £19.99 (DVD)/£29.99 (Blu-ray)/£34.99 (Blu-ray 3D)

Distributor: Paramount Home Entertainment

Director: Marc Forster

Cast: Brad Pitt, Mireille Enos, David Morse, James Badge Dale



IN THE BUILD-UP

to the release of this Brad Pitt blockbuster, it was amusing – and, for zombiephiles, faintly annoying – that the marketing campaign was noticeably shy about elaborating on what the Z actually stood for. For all the casual observer knew, Brad could be flying around the world to battle ferocious zebras. Which, to be fair, is a film we'd pay good money to see.

The marketing people can claim they've been vindicated, though, since despite negative buzz about a "troubled production", *World War Z* triumphed at the box office, raking in over \$500 million worldwide. It's not only the highest grossing zombie film ever made, it's the highest grossing Brad Pitt film ever made.

Of course, we'll never know for sure if the marketing people were right – maybe it would have racked up another \$100 million if they'd, y'know, mentioned the zombies. And in a sense, we still don't know if a zombie movie can be a worldwide smash. Because despite all appearances, *World War Z* isn't really a zombie movie.

It's a film that spends a little too much time hovering above the human drama

What is it? A disaster movie, one in which the agent of apocalypse just happens to be walking (and running) human corpses, rather than, say, glaciers or a meteor strike. As waves of impressively rendered CGI undead sweep down city streets, wiping out everything in their path, it's impossible not to be reminded of say, a tidal wave hitting New York in *The Day After Tomorrow*.

Former UN investigator Gerry Lane isn't much of a role for Brad Pitt really: a super-capable, squeaky-clean family man who can do whatever the script requires, whether it's impromptu field surgery, flying a plane, or walking out of said plane unscathed after it drops out of the sky. Pitt has some transformative performances under his belt, but as Gerry travels around the world – from the USA to South Korea and on to Jerusalem – desperately searching for the "patient zero" case he hopes will provide the key to a cure, you half expect the soldiers and scientists he meets along the way to squeal, "Ohmygod it's Brad Pitt!" and mob him for autographs.

The scale of the enterprise is undeniably impressive – if George A Romero ever sees this film, he'll no doubt sigh wistfully at the helicopters, aircraft carriers and military planes which *World War Z* brazenly displays like a multimillionaire lighting his cigar with a rolled-up £50 note. And the action sequences – which kick off almost immediately, with a truck ploughing through a Philadelphia traffic jam – are stunningly realised and often downright breathtaking.

Problem is, we human beings find it difficult to comprehend large numbers, and *World War Z* is a film that spends a little too much time hovering above the human drama, displaying grand vistas and giant crowds from the point of view of a chopper, rather than getting up close



Still, at least the pound shops were good in Blackpool.

and personal. At times, you feel like Harry Lime in *The Third Man*, as he gazed down from a Ferris wheel and observed, "The people below look just like ants... and they count for no more than ants." The zombies are more interesting in small numbers – leaping lemming-like off the top of a building after pursuing Pitt to his helicopter, for example – than they are as an all-consuming horde. And as for the people... you want to see their faces, know their names, understand their fear. With the exception of one female Israeli soldier and one undead scientist, neither side has much individuation.

That lab-coated zombie crops up in the final act, which, weirdly, takes a detour to Cardiff (the sight of an abandoned milk float after all that military hardware makes you want to cheer), a place which seems puzzlingly free of ravaging zombie hordes (maybe the undead don't like the flavour of the Welsh?). It's only in this last 20 minutes – the results of a reshoot, after the more overblown ending originally conceived was (thank goodness) deemed to lack "a personal connection", that *World War Z* actually starts to feel like a proper zombie movie.

As the focus draws tightly in on

MINDPROGE •

Scott Farrar

Visual Effects Supervisor
on *World War Z*

► **Director Marc Forster has said that the zombies were inspired by patterns in nature. What kind of research did that involve?**

We looked at YouTube and video references. There were some wonderful aerial views from helicopters of birds in flight. We looked at "Who leads?" and "What are the patterns?" When we watched the video of birds collectively flying I was like, "I've never seen anything like it". It was incredibly stimulating.

► **Did creating the zombies present many challenges?**

To have the jerky movement in a fast-moving zombie was challenging. It was challenging to make that look good. Like when the zombies run down a ramp past a small boy - it was easy to get them to run smoothly, but then they didn't look like zombies. It was also difficult to get the walks right and not looking too ghoulish.

► **What sort of reference did you look at for the scenes when swarms of zombies come down a street?**

We looked at the running of the bulls in Pamplona. People were getting crushed against the walls. The ones that fall at the front get smacked on the ground. I wanted more of a brutality to it.

► **How involved was Brad Pitt with the effects?**

Brad was very involved in post-production. In the end, when we were at Pinewood Studios in London and Wales, Brad was in the cutting room almost every day. He was very dedicated to the film.

? Ludi Boeken (Mossad agent Warmbrunn) had never acted before. He's a film director/producer and former war reporter.

three people armed with axes and bats, as they creep around the corridors of a research facility, desperately trying to avoid being spotted by the undead scientists roaming the corridors, it's finally possible to feel tension, and to worry about the characters. For too much of this technically impressive but curiously unaffected film's running time, the only emotion it's possible to feel is *awe*.

EXTRAS: A pretty meagre spread, and doubly disappointing given that there's clearly a fascinating behind-the-scenes story to be told about the production. There's no commentary, and no sight of the original ending. Ho-hum. Maybe in

10 or 20 years' time they'll feature on a tell-all Special Edition.

What you do get are a load of generic behind-the-scenes featurettes. The DVD has two: the first on the origins of the project (eight minutes); the second on how they looked to science for inspiration, researching various kinds of swarm behaviour in nature (seven minutes). Buy the Blu-ray (rated) and you get an additional four, all of which have interesting glimpses of greenscreen work and the like, but spend an irritating amount of time explaining the plot of the film which you've probably just

finished watching. "Outbreak" (eight minutes) discusses filming on the streets of Glasgow, which were transformed into Philly with the aid of signage, imported cars and digital augmentation; "The Journey Begins" (nine minutes) visits a British Navy ship docked in Falmouth, which stood in for an aircraft carrier; "Behind The Wall" (ten minutes) tags along in Malta, which doubled for Israel; finally, "Camouflage" (nine minutes) focuses on the Cardiff section. **Ian Berriman**

BLU-RAY DEBUT

Hammer Horror

From an Egyptian tomb to an English village

The Mummy

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

Release Date: 21 October

1959 | PG | 85 minutes | £24.99 (double-play Blu-ray)

Distributor: Icon Entertainment

Director: Terence Fisher

Cast: Peter Cushing, Christopher Lee, Yvonne Furneaux, Eddie Byrne

The Witches

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

Release Date: 21 October

1966 | 12 | 88 minutes | £22.99 (double-play Blu-ray)

Distributor: StudioCanal

Director: Cyril Frankel

Cast: Joan Fontaine, Kay Walsh, Alec McCowen, Duncan Lamont

AFTER SUCCESSES WITH

Frankenstein and *Dracula*, Hammer adapted another classic Universal property, giving Chris Lee a third chance – after his gliding Count and lumbering Creature – to demonstrate his mastery of mime as the Mummy.

The plot is a mite confused, dropping the romantic subtext central to the 1932 film, then belatedly remembering it. But historical flashbacks still impress with their low-budget pomp, and

Lee's ability to invest a walking corpse with both pathos and terrifying power is remarkable.

The Witches (penned by Quatermass's Nigel Kneale) is surprisingly little like a traditional Hammer film. Joan Fontaine is the teacher in a village where folk seem suspiciously eager to ensure a teenage girl remains *virgo intacta*... It's a female-centric film of restrained menace; one suspects Mark Gatiss would like the shot where the family butcher sinisterly sharpens his knives.



"Mmm... No, I think I preferred the first suit you tried on tonight."

Sadly, the hard work put into sustaining sinister suspense is undone by a diabolical disco ritual featuring utterly ludicrous choreography. You should be quaking with fear, instead you end up shaking with laughter.

EXTRAS: On *The Mummy*, "Memories Of Bray" (47 minutes) is a heartwarming doc about Hammer's 1951-1966 studio. Actors and creatives reminisce about its convivial atmosphere, waxing rhapsodic about the staff bus and the catering. Play a drinking game with the word "family" and you'll end up in a coma. A solid *Making Of* (29 minutes) has contributions from the wardrobe mistress and the set designer's widow. Another featurette (14 minutes) pays tribute to actors who made multiple Hammer appearances. Plus: an episode of clip show *World Of Hammer*, a promo reel, a gallery, a booklet (ROM content), and *Stolen Face* (72 minutes), a 1952 Hammer noir.

The Witches has "Hammer Glamour" (42 minutes), which features interviews with pin-ups like Valerie Leon. **Ian Berriman**

? The way nine out of ten mummies were wrapped means they don't actually have distinct arms and legs.

American Horror Story: Asylum

You don't have to be mad to work there...

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

Release Date: 21 October

2012 | 18 | 572 minutes | £29.99 (DVD)/£34.99 (Blu-ray)

Distributor: Twentieth Century Fox Entertainment

Director: Bradley Buecker, Alfonso Gomez-Rejon

Cast: Jessica Lange, Zachary Quinto, James Cromwell, Lily Rabe, Joseph Fiennes



"BIGGER! LOUDER!

Dafter!" That's *American Horror Story*'s second year. Where season one was a hyper-stylised

patchwork of haunted house clichés, *Asylum* is grander in scope, taking in two time periods, alien abductions, serial killers and a very icky scene with a coathanger. It is, appropriately, quite mad.

It's 1964 and Sister Jude (Jessica Lange) runs the Briarcliff Manor Sanatorium, while turning a blind eye to her colleague Dr Arden's inmate experiments. Reporter Lana Winters (Lily Rabe) is investigating the wrongdoings, but is institutionalised to stop her from revealing the truth.

Running parallel to this is a strand set in the present day. Some foolish trespassers (including, weirdly, the singer from Maroon 5) are exploring the now abandoned asylum and telling tales of Bloody Face, a masked murderer who wreaked havoc in the '60s. Guess who they bump into?

Asylum is blessed with a stellar cast, with Lange the standout. Jude is a loathsome human, but through some canny characterisation we start to feel real sympathy for her. She's backed up by Zachary Quinto as Thredson, and James Cromwell as the hissable Nazi scientist Arden.



David Walliams would happily play any one of these roles.

It looks brilliant too. Briarcliff is a nightmarish central location reminiscent of the claustrophobic institute from Scorsese's *Shutter Island*. Even when people escape, you know it's only a matter of time before they'll be pulled back in...

Trouble is, while the show is deliberately heightened, it can make for frustrating viewing. It has only the most casual regard for little things like logic and pacing. The alien plotline is – somehow – more convoluted than *The X-Files*, and there are entire storylines that simply fizzle away into nothing.

Still, if you love horror, then it's hard not to be charmed by a show that's so gleefully nasty, dryly funny and confident enough to throw in a beautifully choreographed musical number alongside shambling mutants and Ian McShane as a murderous Santa Claus.

EXTRAS: Two docs ("What Is American Horror Story: Asylum?" and "Behind The Fright"), both around 20 minutes; deleted scenes (seven minutes); three featurettes, including a piece on the creature effects. **Will Salmon**

? James Cromwell won an Emmy for Outstanding Supporting Actor In A Miniseries Or Movie for his role as Dr Arden.

After Earth

After a few rewrites'd be better

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

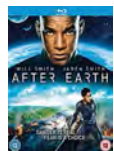
Release Date: OUT NOW!

2013 | 12 | 100 minutes | £19.99 (DVD) / £24.99 (Blu-ray) / £26.99 (Blu-ray Steelbook)

Distributor: Sony Pictures Home Entertainment

Director: M Night Shyamalan

Cast: Will Smith, Jaden Smith



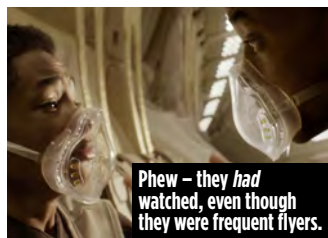
MAIN PROBLEMS

with *After Earth* #1: No one wants to watch a Will Smith sci-fi movie in which Will Smith doesn't quip. Maybe the guy is labouring under the misconception that this "serious" role will make people look at him in a new light, but playing a frowny Mr Spock isn't going to win him any new respect. Razzies, maybe...?

Main problems with *After Earth* #2: It's terrible.

This trite tale of father and son bonding after crash-landing on a planet overrun by mutant animals is so mindnumbingly predictable you half hope there'll be a Shyamalan twist that reveals it's all been some VR training test or something.

Nope. We're supposed to take this pompous, humourless tosh – with



its repetitive action sequences, blandly efficient FX and silly production design – seriously.

You may find yourself rooting for the mutant monsters.

EXTRAS: A bunch of humdrum featurettes: "A Father's Legacy" (eight minutes of "This is not a sci-fi movie, it's a relationship movie!"); "Building A World" (12 minutes of "This is a sci-fi movie! Look at the spaceships!"); "Pre-Visualizing The Future" (six minutes); "The Animatics Of After Earth" (eight minutes); "1000 Years In 300 seconds" (just five minutes of behind-the-scenes footage); "The Nature Of The Future" (five minutes of nature photography... no, really!) and an alternative opening (two minutes). **Dave Golder**

⚠ Although many have suggested that the film has a Scientology subtext, the Church Of Scientology has issued an official denial.

Curse Of Chucky

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

Release Date: 21 October

2013 | 18 | 93 minutes | £12.99 (DVD) / £15.99 (Blu-ray)



IT WAS A DARK

and stormy night. And killer doll Chucky was on the loose in a big, scary house, picking off its inhabitants one by one...

This latest *Chucky* film is much better than a straight-to-DVD movie has any right to be. The tone is a world away from the last couple of entries, back to being serious and scary. The story may not sound particularly original, but the film niftily negotiates potentially over-familiar tropes, and along the way there are even homages to Hitchcock and vintage chiller *The Spiral Staircase*.

Our only complaint is that the filmmakers don't know when to stop – possibly there's one fan-pleasing twist too many.

EXTRAS: On the DVD, nothing. On the Blu-ray (rated) you get three featurettes, deleted scenes, a gag reel and storyboard comparisons.

Russell Lewin

BLU-RAY DEBUT

The Sword In The Stone

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

Release Date: OUT NOW!

1963 | U | 79 minutes | £18.99 (Blu-ray)



ITS SPARSE

animation style, with sketchy lines and indistinct backgrounds, gives this cheerful

adaptation of TH White's Arthurian novel a nostalgic, storybook feel.

Alas, it suffers from a wearisome narrative; it recounts episodes in the life of young orphan prince Arthur, known affectionately as Wart, as Merlin educates him by magically transforming him into a series of animals. Sadly the tale lacks the wit and energy of Disney's better-known classics – it's certainly no *Jungle Book*, which was the studio's very next movie.

EXTRAS: An alternate opening (in storyboards); a chat with the composers; an excerpt from a TV special about conjuring tricks; classic Goofy and Mickey cartoons; a sing-along mode. **Dave Bradley**

Grimm Season Two

You're Nicked

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

Release Date: 28 October

2012-13 | 15 | 913 minutes | £34.99 (DVD) / £39.99 (Blu-ray)

Distributor: Universal

Creators: Stephen Carpenter, David Greenwalt, Jim Kouf

Cast: David Giuntoli, Bitsie Tulloch, Russell Hornsby, Sasha Roiz, Silas Weir Mitchell



THE FIRST

season of the fantasy cop drama about creature-hunter Nick Burkhardt was a slow-starter, veering

wildly in all directions; it wasn't until two-thirds of the way through that it finally figured out quite what that kind of beast it was.

This decided, season two is much better: the cast have gelled, the writers know the tone and even the FX for the monstrous Wesen are cooler, seamlessly flowing onto faces as they move, rather than looking grafted on later. Matters are helped by the fact that Nick's vapid girlfriend, Juliette, finally gets a plotline that doesn't involve her staring at him gormlessly while he lies and covers up his double life.

This season's arc plot (some



"Hands up, Ewok scum!"

nonsense about keys and bickering European royals) pales beside the show's gross creatures, like the eyeball-licking fly from "Mr Sandman". Most of this run's episodes are generic – someone dies, Nick hunts down the Wesen responsible – and a few fail miserably. But the warm camaraderie amongst the cast, amusing one-liners from Nick's mate Monroe, and the fact that our goody two-shoes hero finally starts to crack under the strain of being a Grimm make things great fun.

EXTRAS: Web series "Bad Hair Day" (nine minutes), a collection of "Monroe's Best Moments", a couple of featurettes, deleted scenes and a gag reel. The Blu-ray (rated) adds an extended version of episode six.

Meg Wilde

⚠ Russell Hornsby (Detective Griffin) was written out of two episodes after injuring his leg. Griffin was said to be on holiday.

WINNER
BEST HORROR FILM
MANCHESTER
FESTIVAL OF HORRORS
2012

WINNER
BEST HORROR FILM
BUFFALO SCREAM
FESTIVAL OF HORRORS
2012

WINNER
BEST HORROR FILM
THE FILM FESTIVAL OF
COLORADO-ARIZONA
2012

WINNER
BEST HORROR FILM
MEMPHIS
FESTIVAL OF HORRORS
2012

WINNER
BEST HORROR FILM
LOS ANGELES
FESTIVAL OF HORRORS
2012

"A DAMNED EERIE EXPERIENCE" HORRORNEWS.NET

"ONE TO WATCH" SFX MAGAZINE

"NOT ONLY CREEPY, BUT TRULY HAUNTING" STEPHEN VOLK

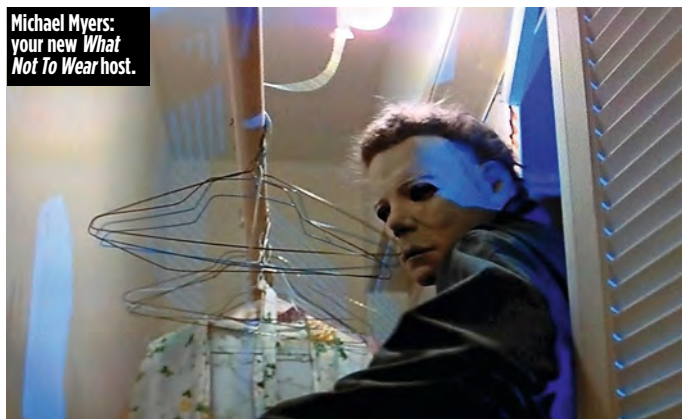
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Michael Myers:
your new *What
Not To Wear* host.



Halloween



He came home again

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

Release Date: 21 October

1979 | 18 | 93 minutes | £19.99 (Steelbook Blu-ray)

Distributor: Anchor Bay Entertainment

Director: John Carpenter

Cast: Jamie Lee Curtis, Donald Pleasence, PJ Soles, Kyle Richards



IT WASN'T THE

first slasher, but John Carpenter's classic set the standard by which all films which feature someone trying to fillet people with a knife are judged.

Seemingly unkillable masked killer Michael Myers is an eerie presence who bestrides the dividing line between the natural and the supernatural. Jamie Lee Curtis is excellent as bookish babysitter Laurie Strode. And Carpenter's synthtastic score buries itself in your brain. Essential.

EXTRAS: This edition features a new high-def transfer, supervised by the film's cinematographer. A

ten-year-old locations featurette and trailers are bolstered by two new bonuses. Carpenter and Curtis team up on an excellent commentary, pointing out tiny details like a camera shadow or stray fag smoke.

Hour-long doc *The Night She Came Home* follows Curtis as she makes her first appearance at a horror con – and we mean *follows* – you half expect the camera to walk into the bathroom with her.

Initially this seems like a pointless exercise, but once you stop expecting talking heads, it becomes a surprisingly interesting insight into the world of signing queues and green rooms, one which Curtis comes out of extremely well.

If you're a hardcore Halloween-head who revisits Haddonfield every 31 October, hunt this down.

Ian Berriman

? When we share Michael's POV as he kills his sister, the hand seen stabbing actually belongs to a woman – producer Debra Hill.

It was Ethel's worst
sleepwalking
episode yet.



BLU-RAY DEBUT

The Fury

Anger is an energy

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

Release Date: 28 October

1978 | 18 | 118 minutes | £19.99 (Blu-ray)

Distributor: Arrow Video

Director: Brian DePalma

Cast: Kirk Douglas, John Cassavetes, Carrie Snodgrass, Charles Durning, Amy Irving



ONE ADJECTIVE

you wouldn't use to describe Brian De Palma's '70s films is "subtle". *The Fury* is the most gloriously overblown of the lot, a supernatural conspiracy thriller which machine-guns the screen with crimson splashes of poster-paint plasma. Like *Carrie* and *Scanners*, it's a tale of troubled telepaths. But it's a tad inferior to those psi-powered siblings.

Kirk Douglas plays a former agent whose son is kidnapped by a government organisation looking to exploit his abilities. Cue furiously flared nostrils and pensioner

parkour as dad hunts for him, taking a gifted girl (Amy Irving's Gillian) under his wing. But when the family reunion finally comes, it's not all hugs and kisses...

De Palma's a master stylist, and setpieces like an extended slow-motion sequence where Gillian escapes from a clinic are breathtaking. John Cassavetes is effortlessly reptilian as the villain, and John Williams's score is up there with his best work.

Sadly, there's not much to the story, beyond a lot of frantic searching and chasing. What was it Shakespeare said about sound and fury?

EXTRAS: The main draw is a chat with Sam Irvin Jr (48 minutes), an intern during location filming, whose memories are remarkably vivid; it's rather like an oral version of a *Making Of* featurette. Plus: interesting new interviews with DoP Richard Kline (26 minutes) and actress Fiona Lewis (13 minutes); four bland period interviews (23 minutes); De Palma-homaging short *Double Negative* (20 minutes); a gallery; a booklet. **Ian Berriman**

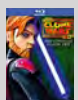
? James Belushi appears as a background extra. Look out for him in a beach scene, topless and wearing denim shorts. Sexy.

ROUND-UP

THE CLONE WARS SEASON FIVE

Release Date: OUT NOW!

2012-3 | PG | 430 minutes |
£26.99 (DVD) / £34.99 (Blu-ray)



Season five finishes with more cliffhangers than *The Empire Strikes Back*. Sadly, the *Clone Wars*' recent cancellation means there won't be a *Return Of The Jedi* to tie up the loose ends. It's a shame, because this is arguably the show's best year. Further story arcs have been produced, and it's been hinted that some will see the light of day – at this point, however, we have no idea how or when.

HERCULES

Release Date: OUT NOW!

1997 | U | 93 minutes | £24.99 (Blu-ray)



Not to be confused with the adventures of Kevin Sorbo's peck-flexing strongman, Disney's 2D animated *Hercules* makes its hi-def debut this month. Gerald Scarfe's distinctive angular visuals have stood the test of time and James Woods puts in a particularly spirited performance as big bad Hades, but the story (the son of Zeus journeys to become a true hero and reclaim his immortality) proves swiftly forgettable and the songs aren't up there with the best of Disney's '90s offerings.

WAREHOUSE 13 SEASON FOUR

Release Date: OUT NOW!

2012-2013 | 12 | 840 minutes | £34.99



The good news for fans of Syfy's silly artefact hunters is that "season four" of *Warehouse 13* is really two seasons split into two 10-episode arcs, and the second half is a lot of fun. The bad news is the first half stinks worse than month-old stilton, with a painfully dull Artie-turns-evil plot and yet another tedious end of the world cliffhanger. Still, the second half is essential viewing before next year's last ever season.

THE WICKER MAN: THE FINAL CUT

Release Date: OUT NOW!

1973 | 15 | £24.99 (DVD) £29.99 (Blu-ray)



One of the finest British horror films ever made debuts on Blu-ray, with three different cuts (Final Cut, Theatrical Cut, so-called Director's Cut). The recently released Final Cut isn't *really* new though, so don't get too excited, Wickermaniacs: it's the "Middle Version" released in US cinemas in 1979. There are four fresh extras too: an interview with director Robin Hardy, a restoration comparison, and featurettes on the music and the film's famous fans.

YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN

Release Date: OUT NOW!

1974 | PG | 106 minutes | £11.99 (Blu-ray)



One of Mel Brooks's best films comes to Blu-ray. It's a glorious and affectionate parody of the old Universal horror movies, particularly *Bride of Son Of Frankenstein*. Shot in gleaming black and white, it looks terrific (even more so here), and Gene Wilder is at his most hilariously brilliant as Dr Frankenstein ("that's *Frankenstein!*"). The supporting cast is priceless too, including Marty Feldman as Igor, Madeline Kahn as Elizabeth and Gene Hackman as the blind man.

V/H/S/2

Video killed... well, everyone

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

Release Date: OUT NOW!

2013 | 18 | 92 minutes | £15.99 (DVD)

Distributor: Koch Media

Directors: Simon Barrett, Adam Wingard, Gregg Hale, Eduardo Sanchez, Timo Tjahjanto, Gareth Evans, Jason Eisener

Cast: Lawrence Michael Levine, Kelsy Abbott, Adam Wingard, Hannah Hughes



THE FIRST V/H/S, released last year, was a dizzying horror anthology which grabbed the attention because it injected

furious energy into the found-footage format. This sequel tries to follow a similar path.

Story one, "Phase 1 Clinical Trials", concerns a man who has a bionic eye fitted that gives him weird visions. There are a number of spooky moments, but it feels a little inconsequential.

"A Ride In The Park" is all about our good mates the zombies. Relentless isn't the word: if you're a zombie-phile, fill your face. They certainly fill theirs.

"Safe Haven" features a bizarre Indonesian cult's activities; after a strange and rather dull build-up, it



descends into lengthy, violent chases. The violence is so in-your-face that it looks like a snuff movie – although it's the snot and saliva dripping into the camera lens from the last survivor that really turns the stomach.

The final tale's title, "Slumber Party Alien Abduction", pretty much tells you what it's about. It's the third in succession that has people – here, really obnoxious kids – being noisily pursued and attacked by beasts. There's only so much of that you can watch, no matter how well it's shot (or rather here: quite cleverly made to look really bad).

In all, an okay follow-up, but it's a pity the content isn't more varied and the ambition more lofty.

EXTRAS: None. **Russell Lewin**

Four of the directors – Barrett, Eisener, Tjahjanto, Wingard – were also involved in nuts horror anthology *The ABCs Of Death*.

Epic

A Slug's Life

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

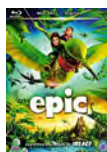
Release Date: OUT NOW!

2013 | U | 102 minutes | £19.99 (DVD)/£28.99 (Blu-ray)/£34.99 (3D Blu-ray)

Distributor: Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment

Director: Chris Wedel

Cast: Amanda Seyfried, Josh Hutcherson, Beyoncé Knowles, Colin Farrell, Johnny Knoxville



IN AN INDUSTRY obsessed with test audiences and focus groups, it's amazing it's taken the poor box office performance of

two animated films this year – *Turbo* and *Epic* – to prove what we all could have guessed anyway: slugs and snails ain't cute.

Epic not only features a comedy snail/slug double act, but a caterpillar (voiced by Aerosmith's Steve Tyler, doing a Jimmy Durante impression) that looks the spit of a blobfish, recently voted the ugliest animal in the world. This film really isn't doing itself any favours...

Otherwise, it's an impressively animated family fantasy about an army of two-inch-high "leaf men" who battle with the rot-loving bad guys for control of a forest. As



eco-films go, it sends out some confused messages, and the plot is a recycled, bargain-basement mish-mash of *Avatar*, *FernGully: The Last Rainforest* and *A Bug's Life*, but there are some great gags and exciting action sequences.

It'd be a lot better with a sprinkling of salt, though...

EXTRAS: The DVD boasts two short nature documentaries for kids (nine minutes) – "Rot Rocks", a three-minute featurette on the bad guys which actually paints them in a good light (because rotting is an essential part of nature!), and a trailer. The Blu-ray (rated) adds a 25-minute Making Of and a three-minute doc on whether humans could survive at two inches tall. **Dave Golder**

William Joyce, author of the book on which the movie is based, also served as a production designer on the film.



The Final Programme

Switch it off

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

Release Date: OUT NOW!

1973 | 15 | 87 minutes | £9.99 (DVD)

Distributor: Network

Director: Robert Fuest

Cast: Jon Finch, Jenny Runacre, Hugh Griffith, Patrick Magee



SOME FILMS ARE born cults, some achieve cultdom and some have cultdom thrust upon them.

Others, like this one, try very hard to be a cult film – and fail. Based on the first novel in Michael Moorcock's Jerry Cornelius series, *The Final Programme* is a strange curio with great imagery and a rubbish story.

In the tattered future, eccentric billionaire physicist Cornelius (Jon Finch) goes after a piece of microfilm which contains the plans for a perfect, self-replicating human being. Along the way he has to deal with his drug-addicted brother, mysterious scientists and a Europe in a state of near-anarchy.

It's no wonder Mick Jagger turned down the lead role because he thought the script was too weird. Conversations occur that appear to make sense on their own, but they're part of an incomprehensible whole. It's an atypical piece for *Avengers* and *Dr Phibes* veteran Robert Fuest, who's also credited as having "designed" the film. Some visuals – like an abandoned Trafalgar Square full of piled up cars – are effective, but the film just doesn't hold the attention. Its wilful obscurity and pretentiousness is alienating, and attempts at comedy further bamboozle the viewer. It's like *A Clockwork Orange* gone rotten.

EXTRAS: Strictly for completists: a "full-frame version", a gallery, two original trailers for the film (one in Italian), and the Italian title sequence. **Russell Lewin**

Hitchhiker's Guide star/Peter Davison's ex-wife Sandra Dickinson pops up as a waitress, in her first screen role.

THE TICK LIST

THE BEST NEW DVDS – GOT 'EM YET?

- 1 LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS**
A Director's Cut Blu-ray of the 1986 horror-comedy musical. ☐
★★★★★
- 2 TRUCKERS**
"Nomes" try to find a new home in this stopmotion Terry Pratchett series. ☐
★★★★★
- 3 THE RETURNED SERIES ONE**
The dead come back in this enigmatic French series. ☐
★★★★★
- 4 STAR TREK: TNG SEASON FOUR**
Data meets his dad in the latest Blu-ray box set. ☐
★★★★★
- 5 BYZANTIUM**
Gemma Arterton is a vampire in Neil Jordan's new film. ☐
★★★★★
- 6 THE WALKING DEAD SEASON THREE**
Rick Grimes and co take on the Governor in another 16 eps. ☐
★★★★★
- 7 ARROW SEASON ONE**
Stephen Amell is the Green Arrow in the CW's superhero show. ☐
★★★★★
- 8 THE FLY**
The original 1958 transporter-accident shocker buzzes its way onto Blu-ray. ☐
★★★★★
- 9 TIME BANDITS**
Terry Gilliam's madcap time-travel fantasy gets a new high-def restoration. ☐
★★★★★
- 10 LOST GIRL SEASON TWO**
Another 22 episodes of the crime-fighting succubus show. ☐
★★★★★

THE RULES: New releases push down old releases. DVDs drop out of the chart after three months.

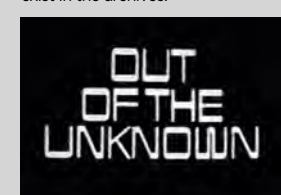
WOI, NO DVD?

SOMEONE RELEASE THIS!

OUT OF THE UNKNOWN

TV SERIES | 1965-1971

This BBC anthology show ran for four series. It mixed adapts of works by the likes of Ray Bradbury and John Wyndham with new stories by Dalek creator Terry Nation and Nigel "Quatermass" Kneale. Sadly, only 20 of the 49 episodes still exist in the archives.



Doctor Who

Farewell to William Hartnell and adieu to the Brigadier

The Tenth Planet

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

Release Date: OUT NOW!

1966 | PG | 94 minutes | £19.99 (DVD)

Distributor: BBC Worldwide

Director: Derek Martinus

Cast: William Hartnell, Michael Craze, Anneke Wills, Robert Beatty

Terror Of The Zygons

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

Release Date: OUT NOW!

1975 | PG | 96 minutes | £19.99 (DVD)

Distributor: BBC Worldwide

Director: Douglas Camfield

Cast: Tom Baker, Elisabeth Sladen, Nicholas Courtney, John Levene

AS OUR THOUGHTS TURN

towards the Eleventh Doctor's final bow, the release of William Hartnell's farewell seems well-timed. One thing is certain: purely as a *regeneration story*, the Christmas special will do a better job than "The Tenth Planet".

Hartnell's exit is surprisingly low-key. There's no great fanfare, it happens abruptly, and it's tacked onto a story in which the hero is largely sidelined. The Doctor doesn't even appear in episode three, and in the opening two episodes he's relegated to the role of an observer, upstaged by guest characters.

It also marks the debut of the Cybermen, creation of scientist/writer Kit Pedler. The fact that he's viewed as '60s *Who*'s "scientific adviser" is bemusing; here Earth's "lost" twin planet, floats back into

the solar system and starts draining its energy. But why Earth has an identical twin, how it's returned, and how the drain works aren't explained.

Still, there's palpable tension in the sequences where mission control staff struggle to save astronauts in orbit; the version 1.0 Cybermen, with their cloth masks and weird sing-song voices, are strikingly weird; and everyone treats the material with impressive seriousness. In many ways it feels like an early dry-run for the UNIT years. The missing episode four is represented via animation. The results are more anime-flavoured than usual, and the likenesses are variable.

Fourth Doctor tale "Terror Of The Zygons" was another transition point, marking the last time the '70s "UNIT family" had a significant role. It's set in Scotland, and boy, do we know it – the deluge of references to Haggis, kilts and bagpipes borders on racial stereotyping.

The Doctor's there to investigate the destruction of oil rigs, which turn out to have been chewed up by Nessie. The story's taken stick for this bog-eyed stopmotion effect, but that's churlish considering the fine direction, perfect performances and haunting, folky score.

Then there's the Zygons. Their half-foetal, half-octopoid design is one of the series' best and their ability to copy "body prints" is full of dramatic possibilities. It's a disgrace that it's taken 38 years for them get another crack of the whip.

Shame about the battiness of their scheme. If you wanted a show of

It feels like an early dry-run for the UNIT years

strength for your fearsome cyborg, why arrange an attack on an energy conference rather than, say, the Houses of Parliament? Maybe they'd just received a painful gas bill.

EXTRAS: On "The Tenth Planet", Hartnell is snobbish and unendearing in a local news interview (three minutes), while Making Of "Frozen Out" (29 minutes), doesn't flinch from addressing his racial prejudice. Anneke Wills and five other cast provide commentary, with added snippets of the designer. "The Golden Age" (16 minutes) and "Companion Piece" (24 minutes) discuss... well, you can probably guess; both are exercises in stating the obvious. More fun: the cute "Boys Boys Boys", in which companions Frazer Hines, Peter Purves and Mark Strickson share their experiences.

"Zygons"'s key bonus is an optional "director's cut" of episode one, which reintegrates a scene of the TARDIS arriving; a lovely little treat. The commentary features the producer, writer, production unit manager, make-up designer and special sounds man. Making Of "Scotch Mist In Sussex" (31 minutes) covers the bases well; the highlights of this and a final instalment of "The UNIT Family" (26 minutes) are warring quotes from John Levene (Benton) and Tom Baker. A moving half-hour tribute to director Douglas Camfield includes contributions from his son and family photos, while 1977 schools programme *The Fuel Fishers* sees Lis Sladen visit an oil rig (20 minutes). The package is completed by a three-minute local news piece (20 minutes), 2003 interviews with Baker and Sladen (43 minutes), and an isolated score. Both stories come with text commentary, galleries and *Radio Times* PDFs. **Ian Berriman**

? An earlier draft of "The Tenth Planet" episode four in which the Doctor *doesn't* regenerate was recently discovered.



BLU-RAY DEBUT

Carry On Screaming

Frying tonight!

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

Release Date: 21 October

1966 | PG | 96 minutes | £22.99 (Blu-ray)

Distributor: StudioCanal

Director: Gerald Thomas

Cast: Harry H. Corbett, Kenneth Williams, Jim Dale, Fenella Fielding, Joan Sims, Jon Pertwee



A GEM FROM the *Carry On* series' '60s period-piece prime, *Screaming* remains the only entry in SFX's

bailiwick and the only one to star *Steptoe And Son*'s Harry H. Corbett.

He brings a world-weary intensity to the role of Sergeant Bung, a detective investigating kidnappings in Hocombe Woods. It seems the denizens of the shadowy Bide-A-Wee mansion, Dr Watt (Kenneth Williams) and his sister Valeria (Fenella Fielding), have been dispatching their Neanderthal servant Oddbod to snatch victims for the "vitrification" chamber in their basement...

Behind the pantomime overacting and the playground gags ("What's his name?" / "Watt's his name!") is a creepy horror homage that gets all the details right. Director of photography Alan Hume had form from films like *Dr Terror's House Of Horrors* and *The Kiss Of The Vampire* and there's an unmistakable fondness for the genre throughout – it parodies Hammer and Universal monster flicks so gleefully that viewers of a certain age may remember it as genuinely scary.

EXTRAS: The original trailer, plus a commentary in which *Carry On* expert Robert Ross prompts Angela Douglas and Fenella Fielding with questions. Sadly this is halting and awkward, and doesn't reveal much new information. **Dave Bradley**

? The car driven by Harry H. Corbett is a rare 1904 Brushmobile, loaned to the movie by Lord Beaulieu.



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The Purge

Night Of The Hunters

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

Release Date: 21 October

2013 | 15 | 85 minutes | £19.99 (DVD)/£24.99 (Blu-ray)

Distributor: Universal Pictures

Director: James DeMonaco

Writer: Ethan Hawke, Lena Headey, Adelaide Kane, Max Burkholder, Rhys Wakefield, Edwin Hodge



DAILY MAIL

columnists, website comment trolls, people who stop at the top of escalators... oh, hi! Just making a little list, in case *The Purge*'s high concept ever becomes a reality.

Set in a 2022 USA, its title refers to an annual event when, for one night, all crime becomes legal, providing carte blanche for some stress-relieving slaughter. Tightly focused on one family, it follows what happens when their young son lets in a homeless guy to save him from a gang of killers.

It's an irresistible premise, though since the concept never remotely convinces the film is best viewed as a warped fable about how violence is ingrained in American society. Disappointingly, that



Got to be better than Danny Baker's Daz Challenge.

premise is never really explored in any depth. Edwin Hodge's "Bloody Stranger" never acquires an identity, and though the class warfare subtext is addressed, the elephant in the room – Hodge is, usually, the only African-American in sight – is ignored. It all boils down to an intermittently entertaining, bog-standard home-invasion horror with a *Star Trek* idea (from "The Return Of The Archons") bolted on.

The most memorable thing about it is the family's chief tormentor, Rhys Wakefield's "Polite Leader" – all sinister grin and smart blazer. Part the Joker, part Alan Partridge, he's utterly compelling.

EXTRAS: Nada on the DVD. The Blu-ray (rated) has a nine-minute Making Of. **Ian Berriman**

Ethan Hawke's latest fantastical film is *Predestination*, based on the Robert Heinlein story "All You Zombies".

Dead Of Night

It's all in the mind

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

Release Date: 28 October

1972 | 15 | 150 minutes | £19.99 (DVD)

Distributor: BFI

Directors: Don Taylor, Rodney Bennett, Paul Ciappessoni

Cast: Clive Swift, Peter Barkworth, Anna Massey



FILCHING ITS

name from Ealing's classic portmanteau chiller – moving studio head Sir Michael Balcon to fire a

disgruntled missive to *Radio Times* – *Dead Of Night* stands as part of the '70s golden age of the TV ghost story, full of dread and intelligence.

Only three instalments of this seven-episode anthology series survived the BBC's insane purge of its archives. They give a decent flavour of the show's remit, though: horror tales more concerned with internal landscapes than lurid scares; suburban, psychological dramas that feel like possessed *Play For Today*s.

"The Exorcism" is the best story here, the tale of two relentlessly bourgeois couples spending Christmas in the country. Just as



Mary's search for the light switch entered day three.

you're smirking at their sherry-quaffing naughtiness it ensnares you with a slow creep of unease, flashing some genuinely unsettling imagery before delivering an ending that feels like a hand on your spine.

"Return Flight" is more of a slog, despite a sincere turn by Peter Barkworth as a haunted pilot – it captures a sense of quiet English desperation but barely any unease. "A Woman Sobbing" is better, a powerful study of a housewife's mental disintegration.

You only wish there was more. Ultimately it's the four missing episodes that are the real ghosts here. **EXTRAS:** A gallery of pictures from missing episodes, and downloadable PDFs of scripts for them; illustrated booklet. **Nick Setchfield**

"Return Flight" was written by former *Doctor Who* script editor Robert Holmes, the man who created the Autons.

BLU-RAY DEBUT

Lifeforce

Nork By Nork-West

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

Release Date: OUT NOW!

1985 | 18 | 106/101 minutes | £22.99 (Blu-ray)/£29.99 (Blu-ray Steelbook)

Distributor: Arrow Films

Director: Tobe Hooper

Cast: Steve Railsback, Peter Firth, Mathilda May, Patrick Stewart



LET'S GET THIS

out of the way. *Lifeforce* contains a young lady in a scrupulously unclothed condition. Rather a lot of her, for rather a long time. It redefines the notion of gratuitous nudity and then flashes you some more until your flesh-blitzed eyeballs slide down your cheeks and you ache to put a coat around her shivering shoulders. "Now she has clothes!" someone declares, so you know her jiggling luminosity is a crucial plot point and not, y'know, the reason teenage boys married their VHS decks in the '80s.

Beyond Mathilda May's barenaked succubus we have a typically shonky Cannon flick that cross-breeds vampire gothic with blatant cribs from *Alien* and



And then all her clothes fell off.

Quatermass. Filled with high-camp stony performances, alternately woeful and wow-worthy FX and hilariously gauche dialogue ("They look like bats... giant bats!"), it's now available in strikingly remastered form on Blu-ray. Teenage boys: the next generation.

EXTRAS: An extraordinary stash: no less than three commentaries (director Tobe Hooper, make-up and FX artists); "Cannon Fodder" – a 70-minute UK-exclusive Making Of, awash with honest, often hilarious behind-the-scenes gossip ("Half the crew were spaced out on coke"); featurettes on Hooper, May and lead Steve Railsback; original trailers; collector's booklet. A second disc features the remastered, tighter theatrical cut. **Nick Setchfield**

Eighties peroxide-rocker Billy Idol was originally set to play a vampire, but was replaced by Mick Jagger's brother Chris.

The Disco Exorcist

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

Release Date: OUT NOW!

2011 | 18 | 82 minutes | £12.99 (DVD)



NOT SO MUCH A

film as a forgery, *The Disco Exorcist* comes disguised as an authentic slice of '70s exploitation, the kind of low-rent grindhouse fare that fires Quentin Tarantino's nocturnal emissions.

Telling of a Satanic curse in clubland, it's an artful phoney, built from scratched prints, missing frames, lazy lip-synch and the kind of ugly, grainy humping that kept the Times Square porno-loop trade in business. And its mix of blood and voodoo, mirrorballs and quaaludes moves with a demented, fiftily amusing energy.

A bad film – or a master counterfeiter's recreation of a bad film? Not sharp enough to be a satire, not funny enough for a spoof, this sleazoid boogie is ultimately more Bermondsey Top Rank than Studio 54.

EXTRAS: Director's commentary; deleted scene. **Nick Setchfield**

Haven Season Three

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

Release Date: OUT NOW!

2012-2013 | 15 | 534 minutes | £29.99 (DVD)



EVEN DURING

its frustratingly naff first two seasons this Stephen King show about a town plagued by supernatural

"Troubles" had two things going for it: a great lead trio and a knack for a cliffhanger. Both are present and correct in the third run, which moves the superb series arc forward at breakneck pace.

The ongoing Bolt-gun Killer mystery, an episode set in the '50s and a bonkers finale are the highlights. There's some incredibly strong character work too. Emotional beats hit hard, while motivations and relationships are impressively fluid, leading the characters in strange directions.

Guest star casting is still terrible, and a couple of the Troubles are stupid, but thanks to a gripping throughline this third season is the best by some distance.

EXTRAS: Commentary on six episodes; trailers. **Jordan Farley**

BLU-RAY DEBUT

Rosemary's Baby

Expecting the unexpected

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

Release Date: OUT NOW!

1968 | 18 | 131 minutes | £19.99 (Blu-ray)

Distributor: Paramount Home Entertainment

Director: Roman Polanski

Cast: Mia Farrow, John Cassavetes, Ruth Gordon



THE CLUE

to Roman Polanski's satanic-impregnation chiller is the lilting lullaby at the front of



the movie, the kind of la-la-la music that should be welcoming us into one of Neil Gaiman's woozy children's tales or a gothic Tim Burton short. That wistful fairytale melody tells us that this is just a Big Bad Wolf story, not to be taken seriously.

That's where *Rosemary's Baby* and *The Exorcist*, its nearest Lucifer-invoking cinematic cousin, differ. William Friedkin and William Peter Blatty were on a mission fuelled by religious anger. They meant it, man. *Rosemary's Baby* doesn't share that impassioned religious literacy – it's a pulp novel made into a pulp film, by a director



Ikea's self-assembly cot drove her crazy.

who's constantly reminding us how silly this all is.

Apart from the psychedelic Satanic-rape scene, it's a largely horror-free horror film. Its devil-worshippers are rather eccentric and dotty – more Long Island Bridge Club than Cradle Of Filth. It does make you wonder what kind of New World Order they want. Free cream teas for everyone?

Polanski initially favoured a more well-fed female lead, but Mia Farrow's delicate, gamine frame gives *Rosemary's Baby* its true horror. When others are hamming it up, it's Farrow's quietly desperate performance that gives *Rosemary's Baby* its true horror.

EXTRAS: None. **Steve O'Brien**

1976 TV movie sequel *Look What's Happened To Rosemary's Baby* saw Ruth Gordon as the only returning cast member.

Smiley

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

Release Date: OUT NOW!

2012 | 15 | 91 minutes | £14.99 (DVD) / £17.99 (Blu-ray)



THE INTERNET

loves creepy stories. Tales of ghosts who'll come for you unless you pass on their message are

regularly pasted into emails, blogs, and even YouTube comments. Teen horror *Smiley* borrows from those urban legends, creating a boogeyman with an emoticon for a face who appears whenever a lulzy incantation is typed into a chat site – but it's also got a serious point to make about online bullying.

Films about the web are often embarrassing, but the depiction of online culture here is spot on. It's the horror element that doesn't quite work. The film never manages to be scary, and though the final reveal is smart, it takes far too long to get there. Still, it's probably the only horror movie you'll ever see that knows what 4chan is.

EXTRAS: None. **Sarah Dobbs**

The Paranormal Diaries: Clophill

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

Release Date: OUT NOW!

2013 | 15 | 88 minutes | £9.99 (DVD)



THIS

homegrown horror from the directors of *The Zombie Diaries* blurs the lines between fact and fiction. Well, we say fact – we are dealing with ghosts here.

The legends of Clophill, Beds, state that a black mass took place in the '60s, and that sinister figures still haunt the site. A group of investigators scope the place out and weird things start to happen – albeit very, very slowly.

The lack of pace and incident aid the air of plausibility, but what's the point? Sky Living is bloated with drab paranormal shows, and this film does little to differentiate itself from them. By the time it does all get a bit *Blair Witch*, the scares are so vague that it's unlikely you'll care.

EXTRAS: Deleted scenes, a trailer, two commentaries. **Will Salmon**

Zombie Hunter

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

Release Date: 21 October

2013 | 18 | 89 minutes | £11.99 (DVD) / £12.99 (Blu-ray)



TARANTINO AND

Rodriguez have a lot to answer for. The influence of their *Grindhouse* project is keenly felt in this budget bloodbath about a nameless hunter, who drives around an apocalyptic wasteland blowing "Eaters" away.

Zombie Hunter has its moments. There's a welcome sense of humour and the film playfully undercuts the more tediously "bad-ass" scenes. One sex scene in particular is played purely for laughs, rather than lechery.

Still, it's not very good. There's the usual fetishising of violence, and the way one female character is used purely as eye-candy, while being mocked for her promiscuity, is fairly gross. And ultimately, the constant freeze-frames and splashes of colour feel less like stylistic flourishes, and more like a way of livening up a bland movie.

EXTRAS: None. **Will Salmon**

All Superheroes Must Die

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

Release Date: OUT NOW!

2011 | 15 | 77 minutes | £9.99 (DVD) / £10.99 (Blu-ray)



WELL, IT'S AN

attention-grabbing title, but one that the film fails to live up to. Villainous Rickshaw (James Remar) has had enough of having his evil schemes thwarted, so he kidnaps his enemies (like "Charge" and "Shadow") and forces them to play a series of sadistic games.

This is basically *Saw* with superheroes. It's a neat idea, let down by the fact that (for budgetary reasons) we never see our heroes do anything super – it may as well be called *All Cosplayers Must Die*.

Remar hams it up, and the dialogue has a certain knowing air to it, but it's a pretty joyless affair.

EXTRAS: Intro by the director; four episodes of his web series, *Blood Beasts*; a festival Q&A; trailer; a trailer for '60s superhero obscurity *Argoman*. **Will Salmon**

COMING SOON

28 OCTOBER

CLASSIC GHOST STORIES Five partially-dramatised readings of MR James by Robert Powell, first aired over Christmas 1986.

CREEPSHOW George Romero's 1982 anthology horror film hits Blu-ray.

DOCTOR WHO SERIES SEVEN

Includes not only all 13 episodes of the split season, but also the last two Christmas specials.

ROBIN REDBREAST This suspenseful 1970 *Play For Today* should appeal to fans of *The Wicker Man*.

TWIXT Val Kilmer is a horror novelist in Francis Ford Coppola's latest.

WONDERFALLS Bryan Fuller's short-lived 2004 series about a Niagara Falls gift shop worker who gets cryptic instructions from souvenirs.

4 NOVEMBER

DOCTOR WHO: THE COMPLETE SERIES A

A Blu-ray box set of all seven seasons, with the first four at 1080p resolution for the first time.

FANTASTIC VOYAGE The 1966 film in which people are shrunk to microscopic size and injected into a bloke's bloodstream comes to Blu-ray.

THE HOBBIT: AN UNEXPECTED JOURNEY - EXTENDED EDITION

Now with 13 minutes of additional footage and commentary.

NICK FURY: AGENT OF SHIELD

David Hasselhoff stars in this 1998 TV movie, written by *Batman Begins'* David Goyer. Yes, really.

THIS IS THE END Seth Rogen and his celebrity chums face the apocalypse in this okay comedy.

11 NOVEMBER

MONSTERS UNIVERSITY This

Monsters, Inc prequel shows how Mike and Sulley first met.

18 NOVEMBER

ONCE UPON A TIME SEASON TWO

Twenty-two more episodes of the show about a Maine town whose residents are fairytale characters.

PORCO ROSSO Hayao Miyazaki's 1992 film concerns a fighter ace bounty hunter who's been turned into a pig-man!

STAR TREK THE NEXT

GENERATION SEASON FIVE

Another 26 episodes hit hi-def.

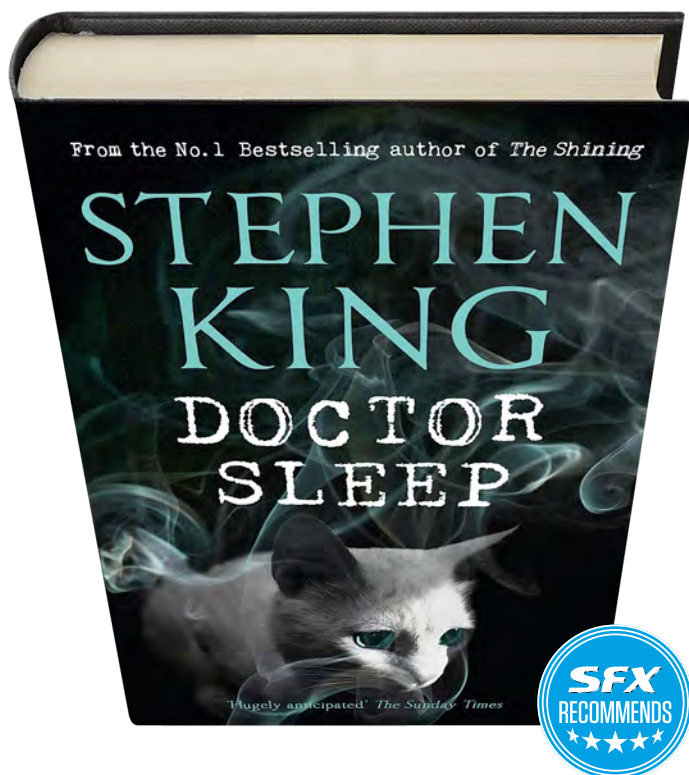
SUPERNATURAL Jeremy Brett,

Denholm Elliott and Ian Hendry all guest star in this eight-episode anthology series from 1977.

UNDER THE DOME SEASON ONE

This Stephen King show concerns a small town mysteriously surrounded by an invisible barrier.

THE WOLVERINE Chris Claremont and Frank Miller's 1982 series inspired the latest Logan movie.



Doctor Sleep

Still shining 36 years on

★★★★★

Release Date: OUT NOW!

485 pages | £19.99 (hardback)/£9.49 (ebook)

Author: Stephen King

Publisher: Hodder & Stoughton

IN 1977 THE SHINING

established Stephen King as the preeminent voice in horror, a field that was, back then, very strong and which now comprises mainly him. Among King's very best works, it's a terrifying ghost story in which psychic child Danny Torrance is trapped in the haunted Overlook Hotel with his increasingly insane, alcoholic father and a whole load of spooks.

King doesn't do a great many sequels, but this is one of them. Set in the present day, *Doctor Sleep* follows the grown up Dan as he wins his own battle with the demon drink, only to come into conflict with a band of psychic vampires.

All of King's usual strengths and weaknesses are here, as are all his usual tropes. King writes masterfully, as always, and cheats a little, as usual. A couple of times his characters are aware of some

important plot point, but King doesn't reveal it to the reader until its dramatic impact will be greatest. That feels a little forced in the work of an author who otherwise lets us into his characters' every thought, but this is King, and you don't care.

For the truth is, there are few writers who have such a way with character (and that character, delivered through authorial peeks into thought and feeling, is so important to his books, explains why they are so rarely well adapted to the screen). Once his stories get their hooks into you, they're impossible to put down.

The story briefly touches on the aftermath of the Overlook inferno, with a young Danny meeting his mentor Dick Hallorann. We're then into a sketchy detailing of Danny's life as he turns to drink to dull his abilities, does something he comes to regret, and eventually finds a kind of peace. Dan settles in Frazier in New Hampshire, where – now off the booze – he uses his “shining” to help the inhabitants of a nursing home die peacefully, earning himself the sobriquet “Doctor Sleep”.

When a “shining” girl is born in a nearby town who's even more powerful than Dan ever was, she attracts the attentions of The True Knot, Winnebago-riding oldsters who torture psychic children to death in order to eat their essence. Danny is inexorably drawn into her struggle.

Circularity is the key theme, as is choice within our prescribed fate, with Danny becoming an alcoholic like his father, then a teacher, like his saviour. It's an idea that's subtly and admirably reinforced throughout. This is noticeably the work of an older man; all King's works deal with death, but at the heart of *Doctor Sleep* is the acceptance of death, appreciating what you have, and finding joy in

All of King's strengths and weaknesses are here, as are all his usual tropes

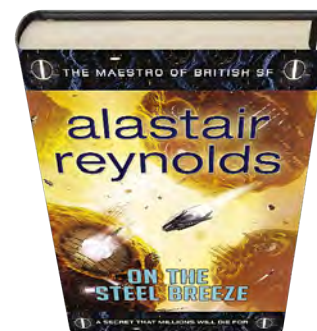
the next generation. The True Knot are great monsters because they're set in opposition to all this. Cleverly, King makes them sympathetic; they just want to live, but their “enjoyment” of the young is unwholesome and they're damned because they defy mortality.

If you're wary of reading yet another King story about an alcoholic finding his place in small-town America, don't be. Here we know the reason for the protagonist's love of drink. Seeing Danny as a gifted/cursed young boy means we feel for him as an adult – Torrance Jr is King's best alcoholic yet.

King has been compared to Dickens, but he's closer to Ray Bradbury. Although King will probably never quite hit Bradbury's heights of prose, there's a similar lyricism here, and the same bittersweet melancholy about the transient nature of life that suffuses Bradbury's work. The denouement of the novel takes place in autumn, and that's no coincidence. You can practically smell the leaf piles burning, their fragrant smoke mixed with that of funeral pyres.

Guy Haley

King was drinking a lot when he wrote *The Shining*, and says Jack Torrance is as close to an autobiographical character as he's got.



On The Steel Breeze

Send in the clones

★★★★★

Release Date: OUT NOW!

496 pages | £16.99 (hardback)/£8.49 (ebook)

Author: Alastair Reynolds

Publisher: Gollancz

HOW MIGHT HUMAN

beings cope with great longevity and the ability to transcend the limitations of our savannah-adapted bodies? It's a question that appears to be preoccupying Alastair Reynolds.

For *On The Steel Breeze*, the second volume in the author's Poseidon's Children sequence, one of his answers is that we might clone ourselves, and then have each of the clones live radically different lives. This is the choice made by Chiku, a member of the powerful Akinya family introduced in *Blue Remembered Hills*. Each clone is able to integrate the others' experiences.

Except of course, even the closest family members drift apart, especially when one version of Chiku is accelerating towards another solar system aboard a holoship. But then a blowout aboard the ship helps to prompt a crisis and even Chiku “Yellow”, whose official job is to lead “a life of quiet unadventurousness”, finds herself at the centre of momentous, AI-driven events.

The potential for big setpiece scenes here is considerable and Reynolds certainly doesn't skimp on spectacle – in this context, rarely have elephants featured so prominently in space opera – but far rarer is his ability to make you care about his characters and make the spectacle seem driven by their choices. As good as contemporary SF gets. **Jonathan Wright**

Steel Breeze is less utopian than *Blue Remembered Earth*: “the darker second movement of a symphony,” reckons Al.

The Violent Century

Super soldiers

★★★★★

Release Date: 24 October

352 pages | £18.99 (hardback)/£9.49 (ebook)

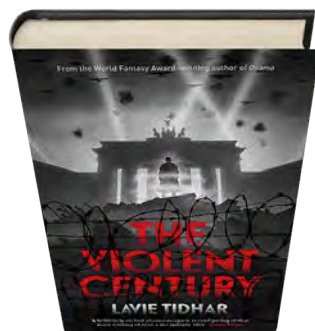
Writer: Lavie Tidhar

Publisher: Hodder & Stoughton

APPARENTLY IT'S NOT

enough for superheroes to dominate comics and movies: they're also making significant inroads into prose fiction. Satisfyingly, however, *The Violent Century* is no unproduced screenplay or rejected Vertigo pitch masquerading as a novel. Lavie Tidhar has created a big, sprawling work, slipping deftly between time periods and locations to tell a story, at once broad and intimate, of superpowered secret agents across several decades.

An experiment by Nazi scientists in the '30s has led to the emergence of superheroes across the planet. The novel follows two such men – Fogg and Oblivion – during WW2 and beyond. The experiment which gave them their powers also stopped them ageing, so after the war is won, they're pressed into service again



and again – the Cold War, Vietnam, Afghanistan – watching as humanity repeats its mistakes.

Throughout, Tidhar's prose is intense and evocative, offering a series of tightly-controlled windows on a world in turmoil, seen through the eyes of people who didn't choose a role on the front line. For an epic novel about war fought by superheroes, it's surprisingly low-key, and sometimes you feel the need for a stronger thread to pull you through – but for these characters, trapped in an endless cycle of conflict, the lack of one is part of the point. **Eddie Robson**

? Lavie Tidhar is currently writing a "steampunk-y" comic series entitled *Adler*, starring Sherlock Holmes's foil Irene Adler.

House Of Small Shadows

Dolls house of horror

★★★★★

Release Date: OUT NOW!

370 pages | £7.99 (paperback)/£4.29 (ebook)

Author: Adam Nevill

Publisher: Macmillan

CREEPY DOLLS, SICK KIDS,

dead animals and wizened old women are the hideous ornaments Adam Nevill uses to decorate his fifth outing into the supernatural, an unnerving body horror packed with striking imagery that doesn't quite live up to its promise, but delivers plenty of scares along the way.

Hordes of taxidermied rats dressed as tiny soldiers recreate the traumas of WW1 in a revolting tableau; floating marionettes act out a scene where a man is pulled limb from limb, tied to a cartwheel... troubled antique dealer Catherine, visiting the remote and bizarre "Red House" to value its rare but uncanny contents, is treated to a barrage of strange sights at the hands of her decrepit host Edith Mason, niece of the great "artist" and master puppeteer MH Mason. It's clear



something's not right but it's not until the very end that the hard-to-stomach, grisly truth is revealed.

Part haunted-houser, part homunculus horror, part *Wicker Man*-style cult caper, it's a twisty but rather back-heavy novel: 90% is a character study and an exercise in tension, with only the final chapters left to pile on revelations thick and fast. Still, you can't fault Nevill's excruciating ability to turn the screw. If nothing else, *House Of Small Shadows* is highly likely to induce nightmares set to the sound of the pattering tap of tiny wooden feet. **Rosie Fletcher**

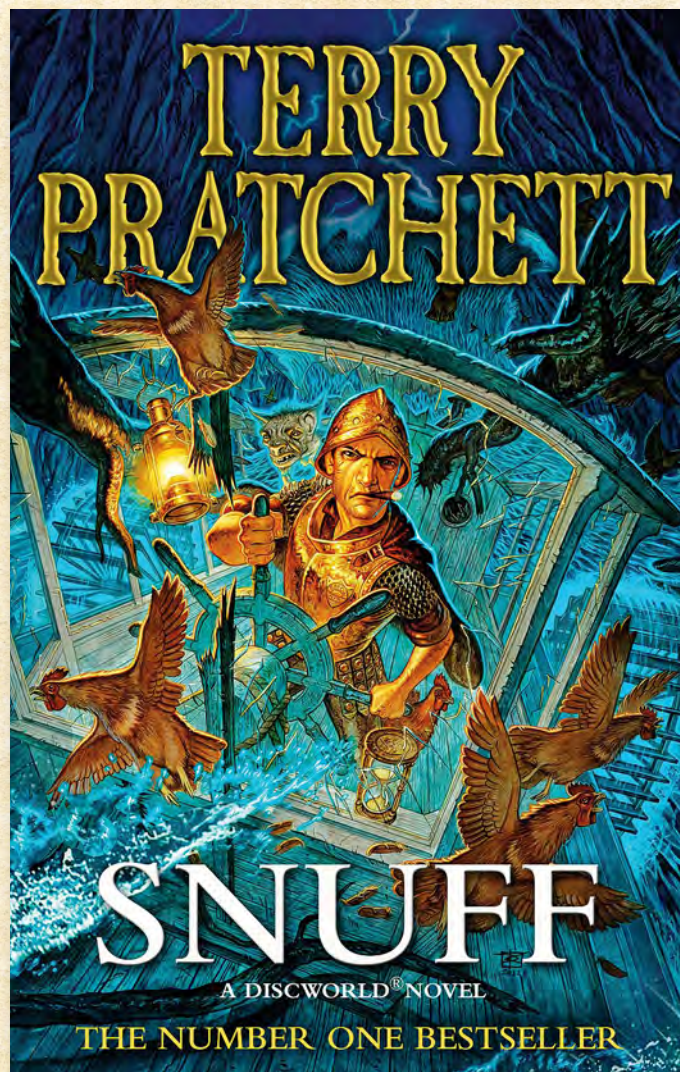
? Nevill's favourite things: "The clown in *Poltergeist*, the Venice of *Don't Look Now*, the bones in the grave of Damien's mother".

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The Making Of Return Of The Jedi

A book long remembered

★★★★★

Release Date: OUT NOW!

362 pages | £40 (hardback)

Author: JW Rinzler

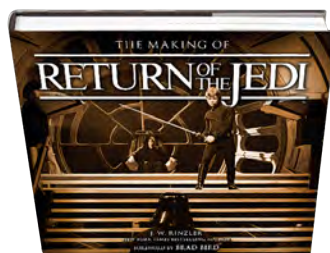
Publisher: Aurum Press

UNLIKE THE MOVIE

it documents, the last of the lavish original *Star Wars* trilogy "Making Of"s is every bit as good as its predecessors – even at 40 quid it's an essential purchase for any disciple of that galaxy far, far away.

The level of access is remarkable as, given the keys to the extensive Lucasfilm archives, author JW Rinzler assembles the definitive story of *Return Of The Jedi*. It's a rich, lovingly assembled book with enough treats to keep you occupied through a stay in the Sarlacc's belly. Just flicking through it makes you feel warm inside.

Indeed, it's so packed with rare behind-the-scenes photos and gorgeous concept art that it would be worth buying for the visuals alone – little things like Han Solo in



glasses or designs for the ultimately unvisited world of Had Abbaddon.

But it's in the words that the real treasure lies. While Rinzler's text occasionally errs on the dry side, the depth is astonishing – even the most obsessive *Star Wars* fan will learn something new here. As well as conducting new interviews with key players, he's unearthed a previously unseen conversation with the film's late director Richard Marquand. And through various script drafts and incredibly revealing transcripts of story meetings between George Lucas and his acolytes, you get to see the *Jedi* you know forming before your eyes. Whatever did happen to the Emperor's lava-filled volcano lair? **Richard Edwards**

JW Rinzler has scripted Dark Horse's new *The Star Wars* comic. It's based on George Lucas's original treatment.

Terminator Vault

I'll be hardback

★★★★★

Release Date: OUT NOW!

176 pages | £30 (hardback)

Author: Ian Nathan

Publisher: Aurum Press

WHEN DOES A BOOK

become a vault? This history of the *Terminator* franchise is a beautiful piece of work, but do four walters of fairly ordinary *Terminator* ephemera warrant the elevated status? As appealing as the reproduction Sarah Connor Polaroid from first film undoubtedly is, we're not sure they do. In fact, most of the other extras here could have sat quite comfortably alongside the many other illustrations in the book.

Still, taken purely as a reference book, the *Terminator Vault* is up there with the best. With *T3*, *Terminator Salvation* and *The Sarah Connor Chronicles* banished to a brief "Legacy" chapter at the back, this is very much the story of James Cameron's movies. New interviews with the most successful director in the history of the universe provide a very candid take on the tales behind both the film that made his name



and its groundbreaking sequel – turns out he's a fan of *T2*, but not so keen on his original.

But what really lifts this above your average Making Of fare is that film journo Ian Nathan strings his interviewees' quotes together with flair. Sure, the information here is densely packed, but the book's so readable that you never feel daunted or overpowered. And when it comes to pure, unadulterated trivia, the book delivers with style – not least in a complete breakdown of all the *Terminator* models that at long last explains that long-running confusion over whether Arnie's original killing machine is a T-800 or a T-101. Turns out he's both! **Richard Edwards**

During the development of *The Terminator*, a studio executive suggested that Michael Biehn's character should have a robot dog.

Star Trek: Federation

To boldly go into the archives

★★★★★

Release Date: OUT NOW!

187 pages | £19.99 (hardback)

Author: David A Goodman

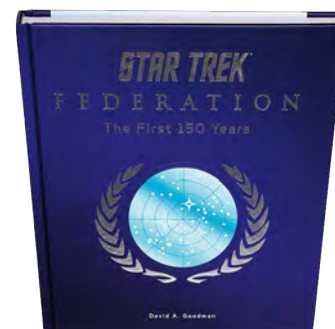
Publisher: Titan Books

FROM THE FUTURE TO

your coffee table, *Federation* (subtitle: *The First 150 Years*) is an in-universe recap of the *Trek* universe's origins, covering everything from Zephram Cochrane's pioneering warp drive test flight through to the death of James T Kirk.

It's a well presented book, especially in its use of illustrations over cast photos, and one that plays things completely straight. When talking about Cochrane for instance, it's the official version that takes point – no Enterprise crew, no Borg.

The result is very believable as a book the Federation Council could put its stamp on, and one that wins bonus points for focusing on filling the series' historical gaps rather than just rehashing original series/*Enterprise* episodes.



The catch is that in being so official, the tone is bone-dry, with the timeframe meaning that civilisation-defining moments like the Xindi attack on Earth barely warrant a couple of pages. There are smaller-scale moments of levity, like a tale of Cochrane having to fix Archer's fridge, and a Klingon's post-Tribble hunt report. They're few though, and while the academic tone works to give the book both its artefact-from-the-future vibe and keep things respectful, it's hard not to wonder how, say, a Bill Bryson of the future might handle the same material. **Richard Cobbett**

When first released in the States last year, *Federation* came with a pedestal featuring electronic lights and sounds – for £75!

Crab Monsters, Teenage Cavemen, And Candy Stripe Nurses

A satisfying Rogering

★★★★★

Release Date: OUT NOW!

Xxx pages | £19.99 (hardback)

Author: Chris Nashawaty

Publisher: Abrams

CULT CINEMA BOOKS

can be visual extravaganzas, or text-heavy behind-the-scenes affairs. The great thing about this overview of the output of penny-pinching B-movie king Roger Corman is that it's both.

It's the perfect thing to adorn your coffee table, brimming with gloriously lurid poster art for films like *Queen Of Blood*, lobby cards and stills. But it's also a satisfying survey of Corman's oeuvre.

His career as a director (most notably on the late-'60s Poe cycle) and producer (kick-starting the careers of Joe Dante, Francis Ford Coppola and others) is already well documented. But Chris Nashawaty's



take on it all still feels fresh. A supremely readable and impressively star-studded oral history, pieced together from interviews with a staggering 64 collaborators, it sees everyone from Sylvester Stallone to James Cameron lining up to pay tribute. Along the way, there are many entertaining anecdotes, from Corman dropping LSD for research to William Shatner having gaffa tape on his groin.

Good job the many garlands thrown at his feet here are metaphorical; otherwise, Corman would be aghast at the thought of the florists' bills. **Ian Berriman**

The book's fact that tickles us the most is that Joe Pesci is a huge fan of Corman's 1994 *Jurassic Park* cash-in *Dinosaur Island*.

Drakenfeld

Classical crime

★★★★★

Release Date: OUT NOW!

430 pages | £17.99 (hardback)/£8.95 (ebook)

Author: Mark Charan Newton

Publisher: Tor

WHODUNIT MYSTERIES

are instant narrative hooks – someone's dead, someone else has to find out why – and they're also the kind of plot setup you can drop into almost any genre imaginable. As a result, we've now got Mark Charan Newton's latest novel, a gear change from his recently concluded *Legends Of The Red Sun* series, that serves up a murder mystery with a historical fantasy flavour.

Set in a richly realised world influenced by ancient Rome and Greece, it's the story of Lucan Drakenfeld, a law-enforcing officer of the Sun Chamber who returns to his home city of Tryum in the wake of his father's death, only to find himself pulled into a darker mystery. The sister of the king has been brutally murdered, her body found in a locked temple with no other possible exit, and there are plenty of potential suspects...



Newton has kept the fantasy very low-key here – aside from a couple of very vague hints of the supernatural, this is a grounded and realistic example of secondary world-building that works well as an intelligent locked-room mystery and also gives us a cerebral, multi-layered protagonist. *Game Of Thrones* fans will find plenty to enjoy in the story's sharply-played political skulduggery, and this first book in the series stands as an intriguing introduction to a world that's challenging and provocative without falling into Grimdark clichés. **Saxon Bullock**

❓ To construct his first whodunit plot and make it water-tight, Newton had to start at the end and build the story backwards.

Dream London

Capital madness

★★★★★

Release Date: OUT NOW!

430 pages | £17.99 (hardback)/£8.95 (ebook)

Author: Tony Ballantyne

Publisher: Solaris

ONE PROBLEM WITH TALES

of warped, funhouse-mirror worlds is that they can feel rather samey. At first, Tony Ballantyne's *Dream London* seems very much in the vein of other weird fiction, especially that of China Miéville, but it finds its own voice soon enough. It's set in a twisted version of the capital, in which buildings and landmarks move and reshape themselves like putty, while the trapped citizens are invisibly programmed to provide old-fashioned colour. Think *Oliver!* from hell.

There are rogues and whores, clerks revising reality in a Dickensian 1984, an endearing frogman and an unspeakable little girl. The quote-unquote hero is gentleman pimp Captain Jim Wedderburn. Intriguingly, the Londoners all know they're living in an altered state, and that the world outside is "normal," but



they're too helpless, or apathetic, to change things.

Wedderburn's misadventures are satisfyingly twisty and odd, as he finds himself in demand from warring parties who all want to use him, and quickly loses his grip on the plot. There's one particularly gross misadventure which could make the book infamous, in an "I can't believe the author went there!" kind of way (London Zoo won't like it), though the humour makes it just about palatable. The end is a bit of a damp squib, but the journey is full of good ideas and fearless ambition.

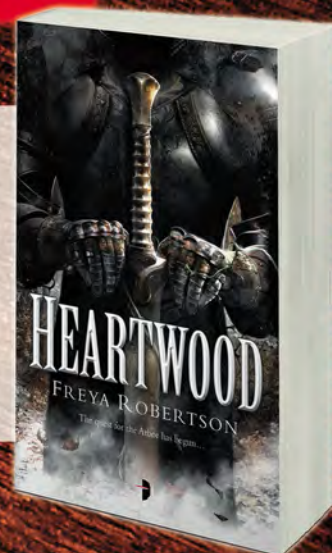
Andrew Osmond

❓ The book's London Necropolis railway station really existed. Used to carry bodies to a cemetery in Surrey, it operated till 1941.

SUPERB FANTASY FOR ALL

The first book of Freya Robertson's *Element Wars* trilogy is a richly detailed epic fantasy of a dying land, for all readers of Robert Jordan and Terry Brooks.

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Doctor Who

The fiftieth anniversary deluge begins

Adventures With The Wife In Space

★★★★★

Release Date: 7 November
304 pages | £12.99 (paperback)/£6.47 (ebook)
Author: Neil Perryman
Publisher: Faber & Faber

The Doctor: His Lives And Times

★★★★★

Release Date: OUT NOW!
256 pages | £20.00 (hardback)
Author: James Goss and Steve Tribe
Publisher: BBC Books

The Essential Guide

★★★★★

Release Date: OUT NOW!
208 pages | £12.99 (hardback)
Author: Justin Richards
Publisher: BBC Children's Books

BACK IN 2011, WHO FAN

Neil Perryman set himself a daunting challenge: to watch every classic series episode and blog about the results – and to do it with his sceptical wife. The results were often hilarious, sometimes genuinely insightful, with Sue, blissfully ignorant of fandom's sacred cows,

voicing questions only an outsider would think of and trashing supposed classics like a true iconoclast.

Perryman's book takes a more personal approach, starting off as an account of one fan's love affair with the series, then moving on to discuss "the project". At the back are appendices on Sue's rating scores.

The "fan memoir" has been done before – journo Nick Griffiths got there first, with 2008's *Dalek I Loved You*. But Perryman's account is wittier and more barbed. It also includes some priceless anecdotes, like the playground game which involved two girls crushing him to death with their chests, and the time Colin Baker publicly denounced him as "a parasite" at a convention.

It's also surprisingly moving. The book's at its best when it touches upon Neil and Sue's relationship, which has, miraculously, been strengthened by their marathon viewing rather than wrecked by it. If you've read the blog, this material will feel particularly sweet.

If you haven't, do so immediately – www.wifeinspace.com. Once done, you'll probably conclude that buying the book is the least you can do to say thank you for half a million words of free entertainment.

If you've read *A History Of The Universe In 100 Objects*, you'll have a fair idea what to expect from *His*

Lives And Times. It takes a two-pronged approach, recounting each Doctor's on-screen adventures through mocked-up documents and ephemera, then addressing the behind-the-scenes story via an oral history stitched together from interview quotes.

Those quotes are well-chosen and assembled, and some of the "documents" are delightful. In diary entries or memoirs, the authors nail the voices of the characters and drop in some very geeky in-jokes.

But the real treats are 33 boxouts, in which, for example, World Wide Web inventor Tim Berners-Lee writes about evil computer WOTAN and writer Tom MacRae confesses to crying at the death of a puppet rat; while seeing '60s script editor Donald Tosh gushing about "The End Of The World" is strangely moving.

Finally, *The Essential Guide* provides further reason to grumble that Kids Today Don't Know They're Born. Previous generations of data-hungry fans had to make do with a tattered copy of the *Radio Times 10th Anniversary Special*. The latest wave get full-colour hardbacks.

Though aimed at younger readers, it doesn't talk down to them. It's broken down Doctor by Doctor, with each chapter including a list of episode credits, and entries on key adventures, companions, foes, technology and the regeneration.

It took us old-timers decades to accumulate all this useless trivia; today's youngsters get it delivered in one convenient info-bomb. Frankly, we're rather jealous. **Ian Berriman**

Also out: Smith-era celebration *The Eleventh Hour*, "thinking fan's guide" *Time's Hero*; updated reissue of *Behind The Sofa*.



The Anatomy Of Steampunk

Will get your cogs whirring

★★★★★

Release Date: OUT NOW!
224 pages | £25 (hardback)
Author: Katherine Gleason
Publisher: Race Point Publishing

THIS GUIDE TO

steampunk style (subtitle: *The Fashion Of Victorian Futurism*) is a proper coffee table book.

It's split into sections showing designer style, stage performers' costumes, street styles and so on. There are also tutorials on how to make steampunk accessories, such as spats, a decorated top hat and the ubiquitous goggles.

Katherine Gleason has gone out of her way to reflect the diversity of steampunk. She achieves this better in some areas than others: the balance of male to female models is excellent, and people of colour are fairly well-represented, though people with disabilities or older models feature less frequently. Nonetheless, it's fantastic to see a wider range of models.

The tutorials are clear and easy to follow. The items being made are stereotypical, but they're fine as a starting point. In conjunction with the photos, you could easily create something unique.

The text, sadly, comes across as a bit repetitive and pointless. Some designers appear in more than one chapter, there are too many high-end designers working with a steampunk aesthetic rather than designers who are actually steampunk, and it would have been nice to see more of regular steampunks in their con finery – at times you do feel like you're reading advertorial. However, for inspirational photos, this can't be beaten. **Miriam McDonald**

Also out: Katherine Gleason's other books include an *Idiot's Guide To Wicca*, and a coffee table book on Alexander McQueen.



Conquest

Alien nation

★★★★★

Release Date: OUT NOW!

416 pages | £12.99 (hardback)/£6.49 (ebook)

Authors: John Connolly and Jennifer Ridyard

Publisher: Headline

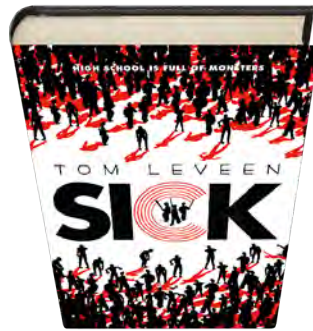
SYL SEEMS LIKE A PRETTY

typical teenage girl: she likes shopping for vintage clothes, skiving off school, and gossiping about boys. But she's not a typical teenage girl. She's an alien, one of a race of invaders intent on colonising Earth. When she falls for Paul, a human resistance fighter, she discovers something that might endanger her species...

Though there is a teen romance in *Conquest*, it's not the focus of the book. Co-authors John Connolly and Jennifer Ridyard spend almost as much time with their adult characters as their teenaged ones, delving deep into the complex political machinations of the alien society. Densely plotted and decidedly grown-up, this is YA fiction for readers who are bored of fluff and sparkles.

Sarah Dobbs

? The names of the alien races in *Conquest*, like Ilyri and Galateans, are taken from ancient Greek mythology.



Sick

School report: must try harder

★★★★★

Release Date: OUT NOW!

288 pages | £10.99 (hardback)

Author: Tom Leveen

Publisher: Amulet Books

THE BLURB FOR SICK

describes it as "*The Breakfast Club* meets *The Walking Dead*". The film, you may recall, is 90 minutes of bratty American teens arguing out their differences and emerging stronger for it. *Sick* follows a similar structure – though the threat isn't a Manilow-loving teacher. It's a horde of zombies.

Frustratingly, Leveen doesn't really do anything new with this set-up. People argue and zombies are fought (though, pleasingly, the protagonists are horrified at the thought of having to kill their rabid friends). It's told from misfit Brian's POV, and you get a lot of insight into his angsty emotional state. But the scenarios presented are so familiar (down to a "don't use the Z-word" exchange) that it's hard to get too swept up. Not sick, just a bit peaky. **Will Salmon**

? *Sick* is Leveen's first horror – though he says, "I learned to write by mimicking a lot of Stephen King's early work."



Fearsome Dreamer

Living a teenage dream

★★★★★

Release Date: OUT NOW!

304 pages | £12.99 (hardback)

Author: Laure Eve

Publisher: Hot Key Books

EVERY CHARACTER IN

this YA novel is driven by the same basic desire: to be more special than everyone else. Which makes them all arrogant gits, even if they have got superpowers.

When the futuristic world of, er, World is threatened, a group of kids (including Rue, who can jump to different places in her dreams) will need to put their egos aside to fight back – but not until the second book. This one's about setting up the universe, not telling a story.

Although the way World is split between nations who've become dependent on technology and those who reject it completely is interesting, the prose is too baggy to justify the page count, let alone make a whole series worth of it an appealing prospect. **Sarah Dobbs**

? Author Laure Eve blogs her dreams, and wants fans to tell her theirs, too: read more at <http://bit.ly/Evedreams>.



Marina

Lost in mistranslation

★★★★★

Release Date: OUT NOW!

292 pages | £12.99 (hardback)/£5.99 (ebook)

Author: Carlos Ruiz Zafón

Publisher: Weidenfeld & Nicolson

AUTHOR OF 2001'S HIT

The Shadow Of The Wind, Carlos Ruiz Zafón wrote YA gothic thriller *Marina* back in 1999. Does it matter? If you're hoping for more deftly-layered, original chills, then yes. If, on the other hand, you're hoping for a clunkingly translated, tick-box-gothic romp through '70s Barcelona, you're in luck.

With women shrouded in black, a young boy falling for a secret-dripping ethereal beauty, a tragic past waiting to be unravelled and something supernatural lurking in the background *Marina* certainly doesn't skimp on action. But lumpy plotting, lazy translation ("it collapsed like a pack of cards" – that's just for starters) and awkward reveals mean Zafón's tale is more likely to raise an eyebrow than the hairs on your neck.

Natasha Hodgson

? Zafón's work has been translated into 40 languages, making him the most widely read contemporary Spanish writer.

PAPERBACK REISSUES

BLACK LIBRARY CLASSICS

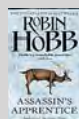
Release Date: 24 October
£12.99 each



Games Workshop's Black Library division has been publishing original novels for 16 years. Now they're reissuing some of their best-loved books from the early days. The first three releases are Dan Abnett's *First And Only*, William King's *Trollslayer* and Graham McNeill's *Nightbringer*. These new editions feature extended cover flaps (three words of pure sex, there...), new intros and stylish new cover art.

THE FARSEER TRILOGY

Release Date: 7 November
£9.99 each | Author: Robin Hobb
Publisher: Harper Voyager



Hobb's '90s series comprises *Assassin's Apprentice* (1995), *Royal Assassin* (1996) and *Assassin's Quest* (1997). All three concern FitzChivalry Farseer, an assassin who possesses a form of magic called "the Wit", which allows him to bond with animals. They're being reissued to tie in with the release of Hobb's new novella *The Wilful Princess And The Piebald Prince*, which goes into the history behind them.

THE FRACTAL PRINCE

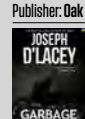
Release Date: OUT NOW!
£7.99 | Author: Hannu Rajaniemi
Publisher: Gollancz



Gentleman thief Jean le Flambeur, kick-ass warrior Mieli and sentient spaceship Perhonen continue their adventures in this follow-up to *The Quantum Thief*, that's brimming with geek-hipster wit. **We said:** "Defies efforts to describe it, but the more outré work of Ian McDonald and Ken MacLeod springs to mind. Its great virtue arguably lies in its very strangeness."

GARBAGE MAN

Release Date: 28 October
£7.99 | Author: Joseph D'Lacey
Publisher: Oak Tree Press



Joseph D'Lacey's eco-horror is set in Shreve, a town with a large landfill site nearby, which eventually gives birth to a gross, five-armed monster... **We said:** "D'Lacey's prose is fresh and readable. It's just a shame he's chosen to convey an uncomfortable message about our unsustainable lifestyles via a cast of characters who are so unpleasant to spend time with."

SUMMER FALLS AND OTHER STORIES

Release Date: 24 October
£7.99 | Author: Justin Richards
Publisher: BBC Books



This omnibus collects three *Doctor Who* novellas, previously released as ebooks. That's *The Angel's Kiss*, featuring River's "Melody Malone"; the Vastara, Jenny and Strax adventure *Devil In The Smoke*; and *Summer Falls*, which ties in to "The Bells Of Saint John". We gave the first ebook ★★★★★, the second ★★★★★, and, er, didn't bother with the third. Sorry!

Wonderbook

Tips for fantastic writing

★★★★★

Release Date: OUT NOW!

352 pages | £14.99 (paperback)

Author: Jeff VanderMeer

Publisher: Abrams Image

WARNING: THIS BOOK

(subtitled *The Illustrated Guide To Creating Imaginative Fiction*) will not teach you how to write a bestselling fantasy trilogy in three easy steps. What it does instead is give practical hints, tips and advice that will hone your writing skills. It's also packed with anecdotes, illustrations, amusing diagrams and copious comments from a massive list of specialist guest stars (such as George RR Martin, Ursula K Le Guin and Neil Gaiman).

Jeff VanderMeer – author of the *Ambergris* novels – has crafted a wonderfully dip-in-able manual for aspiring fantasy writers. It covers everything from inspiration to characterisation, to style and revision, with check lists, humour, marginalia and a lot of expert knowledge. Occasionally some of the guest



specialists get a little highbrow but mostly this is nourishing food for thought.

VanderMeer's canniest move is the way he keeps emphasising that there's no quick fix. If you want to be a writer you need to exercise those muscles. So the book is full of exercises. Ignore them at your peril. They may make you think "Ugh!" at first, but they're practical, inspiring and, in most cases, fun – and if you really don't enjoy them, then maybe that's telling you something about your aptitude as a writer. **Dave Golder**

? VanderMeer's favourite tip comes from Gertrude Stein: "Forget grammar and think about potatoes."

A Dance Of Cloaks

DalGLISH scores!

★★★★★

Release Date: OUT NOW!

445 pages | £7.99 (paperback)/£3.99 (ebook)

Author: David DalGLISH

Publisher: Orbit

DAVID DALGLISH IS THAT

rare phenomenon: a self-published author who's managed to make a living from his words. Now he's entering the world of mainstream publication, with Orbit republishing his Shadowdance books.

DalGLISH has been quick to take advantage of the benefits, and this book has been tidied and polished with the help of Orbit's editors. It's the first of what will be six novels in the series, with three written and three in the works.

Veldaren is a city at war: the thieves' guilds, controlled by Thren Felhorn, fight with the richest families in the city for dominance. It's been going on for five years, but the war will end soon, and bloodily. Thren's son



Aaron has been trained from early childhood to be the heir to Thren's empire – but teenagers aren't as docile as children, and as Aaron glimpses more of the world outside his training he begins to see that there might be a better way of living.

Seasoned fantasy readers won't find much that's new here, but what they will find is fantasy *done well* – characters with hopes and histories, battles in which no fighter is ever perfect. Buy the book, and budget for the rest; you'll want to see this story through to the end. **Rhian Drinkwater**

? Sat at a computer in a high school Creative Writing class and told to write, DalGLISH wrote a 60,000 word novel!



Bane Of Malekith

High Elves make poor heroes

★★★★★

Release Date: November

320 pages | £17.99 (hardback)

Author: William King

Publisher: The Black Library

ELVES. FOR LONG YEARS

they were stereotyped as mere supporting characters in fantasy novels dominated by human heroes. Even the damn Hobbits got starring roles! But now the Elves are striving towards the limelight with a spate of books where they take centre stage.

Bane Of Malekith, the final book in the Tyrion & Teclis trilogy, brings this phenomenon to the Warhammer universe. Tyrion is a fine swordsman and war leader, Teclis nothing less than the greatest sorcerer of the age! Together, these Elven twins are the mightiest heroes to bestride the world of Warhammer. But they're up against intimidating odds. Those nasty Dark Elves, natural enemies of the shiny High Elves, have overcome the defenders of Ulthuan. Tyrion and Teclis must rescue the Everqueen, and with her the hope of the Elven people.

This is all fine archetypal stuff, but isn't as compelling as it should be. Tyrion and Teclis are too powerful, and Elves simply too goody-goody, to make compelling heroes. Their motives are too pure to make seeing the world through their eyes a truly heroic experience. The best heroes aren't heroic by choice; they stumble into heroism and do everything they can to escape their best destiny. Even in the hands of an expert craftsman like William King, Tyrion and Teclis just don't have the stuff that great heroes are made of. **Damien Walter**

? William King will be at this year's Black Library Weekender, taking place in Nottingham on 2-3 November.

THE TICK LIST

THE BEST NEW BOOKS – GOT 'EM YET?

- 1 THE REPUBLIC OF THIEVES**
Scott Lynch finally follows-up *Red Seas Under Red Skies*.
★★★★★ ☐
- 2 THE GOLEM AND THE DJINNI**
Helene Wecker's debut sees two creatures meet in 1899 New York.
★★★★★ ☐
- 3 SUPER GRAPHIC**
The comic book universe visualised in charts and graphs by Tim Leong.
★★★★★ ☐
- 4 NEPTUNE'S BROOD**
Charles Stross's latest space opera is a madly inventive romp.
★★★★★ ☐
- 5 LORDS OF MARS**
Warhammer 40,000 writer Graham McNeill's follow-up to *Priests Of Mars*.
★★★★★ ☐
- 6 THE NEW GIRL**
A spooky girl from the "downside" goes to school in this weird SL Grey horror novel.
★★★★★ ☐
- 7 THE DAYS OF THE DEER**
A larger-than-life fable from Lilliana Bodoc.
★★★★★ ☐
- 8 PROXIMA**
Stephen Baxter's latest novel concerns a colony effort to Proxima Centauri.
★★★★★ ☐
- 9 ANCILLARY JUSTICE**
Ann Leckie's gripping debut centres on Breq, a woman who used to be a starship.
★★★★★ ☐
- 10 STEELHEART**
Superheroes are far from heroic in Brandon Sanderson's dystopian YA book.
★★★★★ ☐

THE RULES: New releases push down old releases. Books drop out of the chart after three months.

BULLET TIME

A BOOK IN BULLET POINTS

ZOMBIE SURVIVAL HAYNES MANUAL

Release Date: OUT NOW!

121 pages | £16.99 (hardback)

Author: Sean T Page | Publisher: Haynes

- Covers similar ground to *The Official Zombie Handbook*, Sean T Page's 2010 small press release.
- Contains useful info on subjects such as how to spot and kill zombies, and how to organise your survivor camp.
- The illustrations recall government information leaflets.
- There's plenty of wry humour. "Combat for the elderly" gives advice on fending off the undead with a Zimmer frame!



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FIRST READ

AN EXTRACT FROM A NEW BOOK

The Silvered

By Tanya Huff

Acclaimed author Tanya Huff combines steampunk fantasy and paranormal romance in an epic tale of werewolves and mages at war with a power-mad emperor.



THE AUTHOR

Tanya Huff is a prolific Canadian fantasy author of over 25 novels, including *The Enchantment Emporium* series and the *Confederation* series, also coming soon from Titan Books. Her stories have been published since the late 1980s, including five fantasy series and one science fiction series. One of these, the *Blood Books* series, featuring detective Vicki Nelson, was adapted for television under the title *Blood Ties*.

As the emperor invades the were-ruled kingdom of Ayodori, Captain Reiter prepares to kidnap five powerful mages, and young shapeshifter Tomas Hagen rushes to defend the were-Pack.

"I can't see how this'll hold anything, Cap." Before Lieutenant Lord Geurin could find words to go with his scowl, Reiter carefully gathered the gold net dangling between two of Chard's fingers, and piled it into the soldier's palm. "You just have to throw it, Private. None of us has to understand how it works." "The tangles are ancient artifacts," the lieutenant snapped. "They'll do their jobs if we do ours."

"But..." Reiter raised a hand to cut off Chard's protest. "Up the tree, throw the tangle among the carriages, down the tree, take the neutralized mages to the empire. Simple. Now, get your ass up the tree."

As he settled into the underbrush by the side of Trouge Road, Reiter had to admit the Soothsayers had chosen the perfect place for an ambush. The road back to Bercarit was visible for some distance – allowing them to identify the last carriages – then climbed steeply, forcing the carriages to slow, the sharp turn at the top of the hill cutting them off from the rest of the evacuation. While there'd been signs of lumbering back away from the road, massive oaks still pressed in close on either side, providing stable platforms for the men with the tangles.

Reiter had to admit, he saw Chard's point about the artifacts. The delicate gold nets didn't look like they could hold an infant let alone an adult, high-level mage.

He'd known mages when he was a boy – an elderly woman with brown-flecked eyes whose garden fed half the village, a legless veteran with a few blue flecks who could make himself

heard over distance – but he hadn't seen one for years. There were probably a few selling their services in the capital because everything was for sale in Karis, but as far as he knew, none served under the Imperial banner. Science had replaced magic in the army. When soldiers carried fire-starters in their pockets, they had no need to waste time seeking out a Fire-mage. Even Colonel Korshan's blasted rockets blew up over enemy lines more often than not.

Science could do anything mage-craft could and, more importantly, anyone could use it.

Given that he had six men in trees holding ancient magical artifacts, Reiter saw the irony in believing this fight had anything to do with the rise of intelligence and training over random talents caused by a lucky dice roll at birth.

He'd just checked with Sergeant Black that everyone was in place when the first of the evacuees from Bercarit appeared, the cursing that came with them in Pyrahn working-class accents. Twice refugees, the poor bastards on the run again before the might of the Imperial army. Able to be first on the road because they could carry everything they owned on their backs. The funny thing was – although probably not funny for them, Reiter admitted – for the most part, they ran from rumor. While opposing armies were destroyed with brutal and practiced efficiency, the emperor preferred his conquered work force alive and working.

Reiter settled more comfortably behind his screen of brush, aware that around him his men were doing the same. Their orders concerned the last few carriages only; the rest could pass.

Tomas had wanted to return to the border immediately, but Ryder had ordered him to eat and sleep. His protests had been ignored; the Pack Leader's word was law. So, hungry and exhausted, he'd done as he was told. He woke just before dawn, remembered Harry was dead, and he couldn't believe he had to wait longer still. In fur, he watched Jaspur head off on personal business – as though anyone with a nose didn't know it was about a woman. He watched Ryder deal with half a hundred stupid, unimportant, petty details. Lip curled, he watched him

finally say good-bye to his wife, and change to fur.

Ryder snapped at him as he passed, but Tomas didn't yield, merely fell in on his left flank as Jaspyr took the right, four distant cousins following behind. Once he was moving, the need that had been chewing at him, the need to return and make the bastards who'd killed Harry pay, began to ease. By the time they left the city, he'd given himself over to the run.

Noses to the west, Ryder led them across country, cutting off the two large loops that eased the Border Road for carriages. Tomas had no clear memory of the route he'd run the night before, but they crossed his scent so instinct must have led him straight and true.

He heard the artillery before he smelled the gunpowder. The wind was against them. Didn't matter. The Imperial army stank, but their noses were useless.

He tried not to think of what they were running toward. Tried not to think of bodies blown to pieces. Of silver slamming bloody holes through fur. Of Harry. He thought of running, and of revenge, and how Ryder would fix this.

Then they came out of the woods, and the blood scent hit him like a physical blow. Blood. And shit. And fear. And memory. He stumbled, but Ryder ran on, so Tomas pushed the terror back and followed. He could see the Aydori line, shattered in places, the living sheltering behind bulwarks of the dead. He could see the Imperial army advancing, another score of infantry in reserve to replace every man shot down. He could hear gunshots and cursing and an Air-mage screaming on the breeze.

There were bodies in fur where the dead lay thickest and death too thick in the air to know if any Pack still lived.

He saw Imperial cavalry charge the exposed Aydori flank. They'd held the horses back then, until they thought the Pack was dead. Hackles up, Ryder raced to intercept, Jaspyr and the cousins following. But Tomas had caught another scent. Knowledge warred with instinct. Knowledge won, sending him away from his Pack Leader toward enemy lines.

Toward the weapon that had killed Harry.

A line of pain burned across his shoulder, but the ball was only lead and the wound healed as he ran.

He pushed off a fallen Imperial, breastplate keeping the body from compacting under his weight, and threw himself up over the heads of the corpse's company. Heard the Aydori infantry rally behind him and knew that, with them returned to the fight, he needn't fear a bayonet in the back. Dodged through chaos, still at full speed.

The impossible range of the new weapon kept it back from the front lines. Far enough back there'd be no reason for a heavy guard.

Speed and agility and the terror the Pack evoked in the unfamiliar kept him alive as he moved deeper and deeper into the Imperial ranks. The part of him trained to war recognized the Imperials' fast advance had opened up their lines and that worked to his favor.

The weapon, up on a small rise, didn't look like much. A fat tube on a cradle. The men around it smelled of curiosity and excitement, distant from the death they were dealing. Men who fought with heads instead of hearts. They smelled of gunpowder, familiar but a more concentrated scent than he was used to.

They smelled of silver.

He had to circle around behind the weapon to approach it.

Heard a man with a telescope shout, "There, a black beast!

Huge bugger! And a gray one! I see four, no, six abominations with them!" And then coordinates. Tomas thought they meant him at first, then realized the big black beast had to be Ryder.

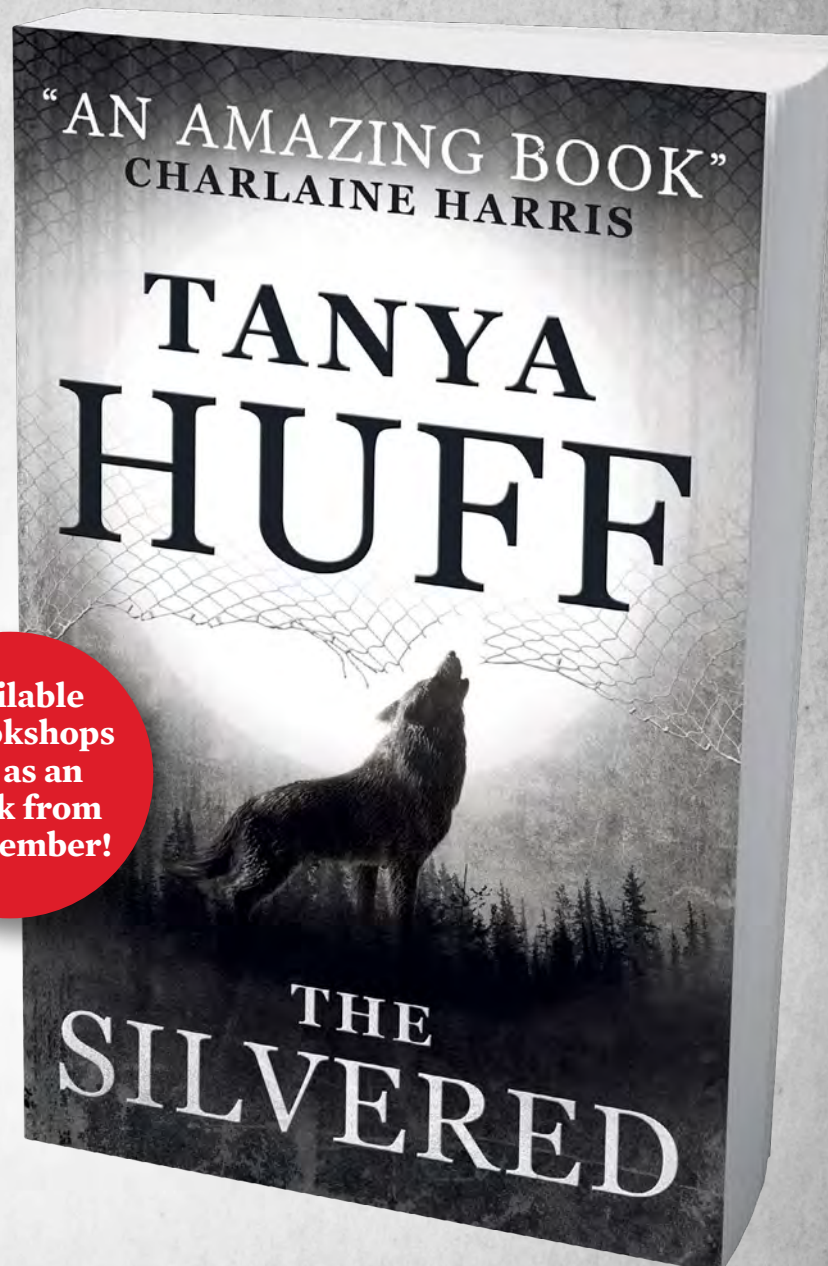
But Ryder and Jaspyr and the others were safe in among the Imperial cavalry.

They wouldn't shoot their own horses, their own men to bring their enemy down.

He thought that right up until they lit the fuse.

His teeth crushed the gunner's wrist a moment too late.

To find out what happens next, pick up *The Silvered*, out 8 November from Titan Books (RRP £7.99). Ebook also available. www.titanbooks.com



BOOK CLUB 94

The Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy

Douglas Adams, 1979

Emma Newman fires up the Infinite Improbability Drive

FEW BOOKS OCCUPY SUCH A special place in the heart of geekdom. Fewer still start life as an audio play. It was developed into a TV series before being written as a novel then further adapted into film, theatre, computer game and graphic novel versions. There's even a Towel Day and Vogon poetry slams. *Hitchhiker's* is firmly embedded in our cultural consciousness.

The story is knowingly absurd. The book opens with the hapless Arthur Dent battling to stop his house being demolished to make way for a new bypass. He's saved by his friend, Ford Prefect, when the entire planet is demolished by the Vogons to make way for a *hyperspace* bypass. Arthur discovers Ford is actually a stranded writer for *The Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy*. After a brief and unpleasant time on a Vogon ship they're rescued by the Heart of Gold, a space ship with an Infinite Improbability Drive crewed by Marvin, a depressed robot, the brilliant astrophysicist Trillian and Galactic President Zaphod Beeblebrox. It's very much the first part of a comically labelled "trilogy" (there are five parts written by Adams) rather than a standalone.

Encountering *Hitchhiker's* for the first time as a teenager was revelatory: science-fiction could also be funny. After reading Asimov, Bester and Clarke for years, it was a pleasant shock to have chaotic space adventures that made me laugh out loud. Arthur Dent epitomises the British everyman, reluctantly lurching from one improbable catastrophe to another with a quiet sense of long-suffering and the constant need for a cup of tea. He's the perfect



Reading it was revelatory: sci-fi could also be funny

example of the archetypal British comedy hero as described by Stephen Fry; Dent is one of life's losers with whom we can comfortably relate.

Hitchhiker's was one of the few science fiction stories that was enjoyed by a wide audience. It starts in a very normal, mundane setting with no hint of sci-fi until a good few pages in. Perhaps the humour lured people in who would normally shy away from "that sort of

thing". Also, I have the feeling that *Hitchhiker's* is an affectionate piss-take of science-fiction – in particular the Infinite Improbability Drive and the way it's used to outlandishly progress the novel. Thus the mainstream audience is given a wink and a "look, this is deliberately silly, you don't have to try to believe it". There's gentle cynicism and irony, and the sure knowledge that everything is set against you, along with the idea that massively advanced technology has led to depressed robots and doors that drive people mad with their cheeriness.

Whether it's the doomed efforts to understand the meaning of life or the bizarre description of how a throwaway comment from Arthur triggers thousands of years of war between two races ending in their being eaten by a dog, there is a sense of everything being futile in the face of the universe's indifference. Even the hope of technology improving life is relentlessly ridiculed. It's quite bleak, really, but Douglas Adams weaves in so many funny lines and quirky descriptions that it isn't a depressing read. Far from it; *The Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy* is both a classic and a delight. **SFX**

Any Other Name, the latest in Emma Newman's Split Worlds series, is out now, published by Angry Robot.

LIKE THIS? TRY THESE!

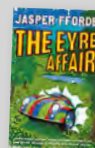
Dirk Gently's Holistic Detective Agency by Douglas Adams (1987)

More of Adams's wonderful wit, this time with a detective slant and lots of elements inspired by his university days.



The Eyre Affair by Jasper Fforde (2001)

Try this if you're keen for more quirky fiction that is eminently British. It follows the adventures of literary detective Thursday Next in an alternative 1985.



YOUR OPINIONS

Join the debate at
<http://forum.sfx.co.uk>

► I was handed a well-worn copy by a friend and I was instantly intrigued by the multicoloured front cover. It's one of a very few number of books that I read again as soon as I'd finished it. I'd never heard of the radio series so it was all new, funny and fresh.

Craig Sanders

► A classic as well as witty. Along with Pratchett, Adams's books should be in school English lessons.

Ian Kirkham

► A beautifully observed study of the human condition hidden in a very funny book. Like *LOTR*, it's one of those books that all other books of its genre are judged against.

Mark Cordory

► It raises a smile but there are funnier books.

Benji W

► It played a big part in programming the way my mind works. Even now I unconsciously use turns of phrase from it.

Chris Limb

► This book is up there with similar satirical works such as *Gulliver's Travels*, and should be made required reading in all schools.

Steve Dowd

► My abiding memory of reading it is joy, it's crammed with a treasure of enthusiastic ideas. It was just the escape my 12-year-old self desperately needed and still is.

Stephen Wallis

► I gave my daughter one of my copies last week. Four days later she said "Daddy, I've almost finished *Hitchhiker's* and it's great!" Nothing like making sure it's passed on to another generation.

John Porter



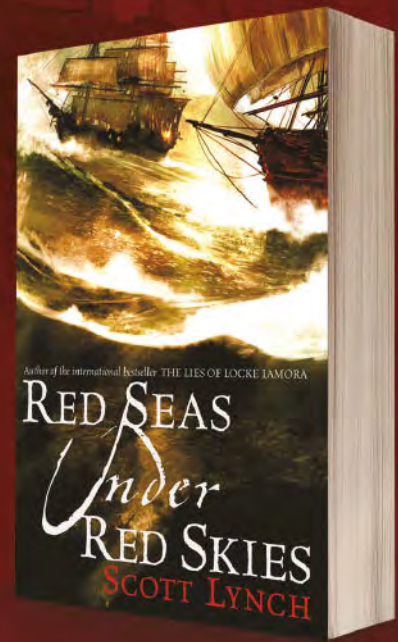
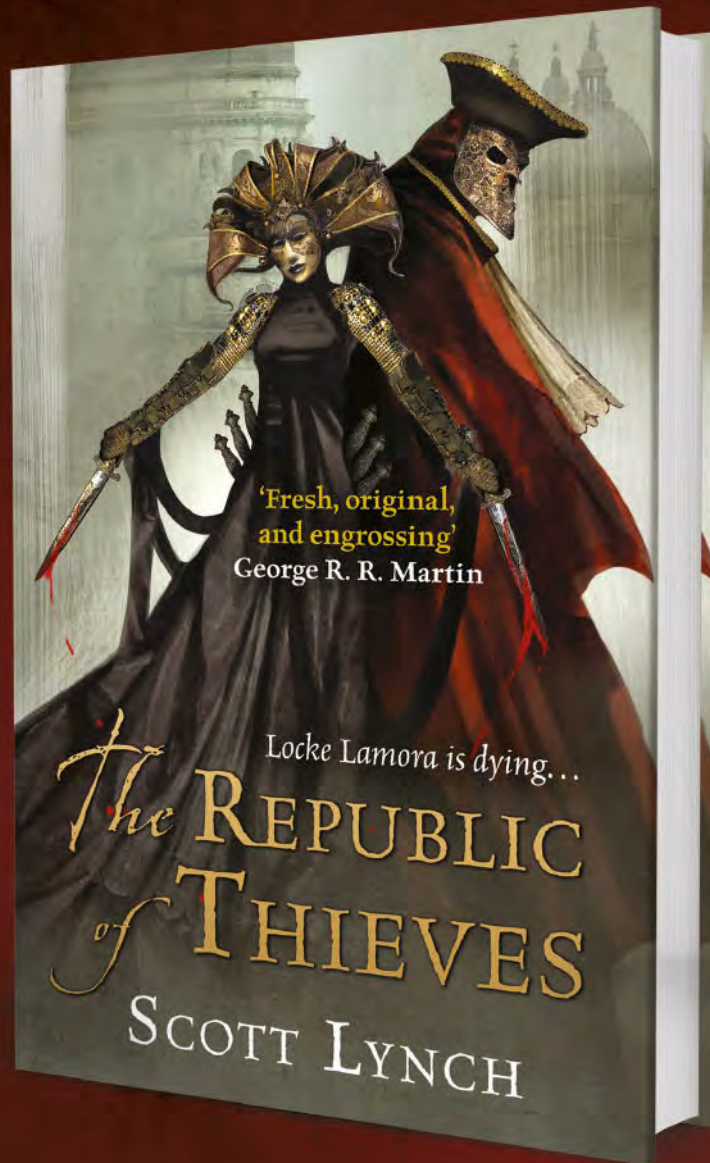
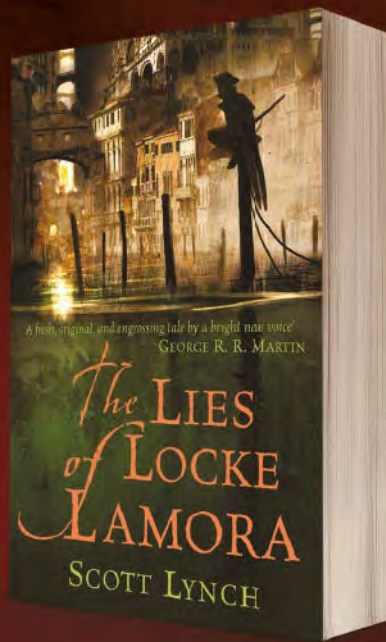
GET READING!

In 243, Adam Christopher will be re-reading Stephen King's *Carrie*.

NEXT ISSUE

To celebrate *Who's* 50th anniversary, we'll be looking at the Target classic *Doctor Who And The Daleks* in the company of Cavan Scott.

The most anticipated fantasy
novel of the year is here



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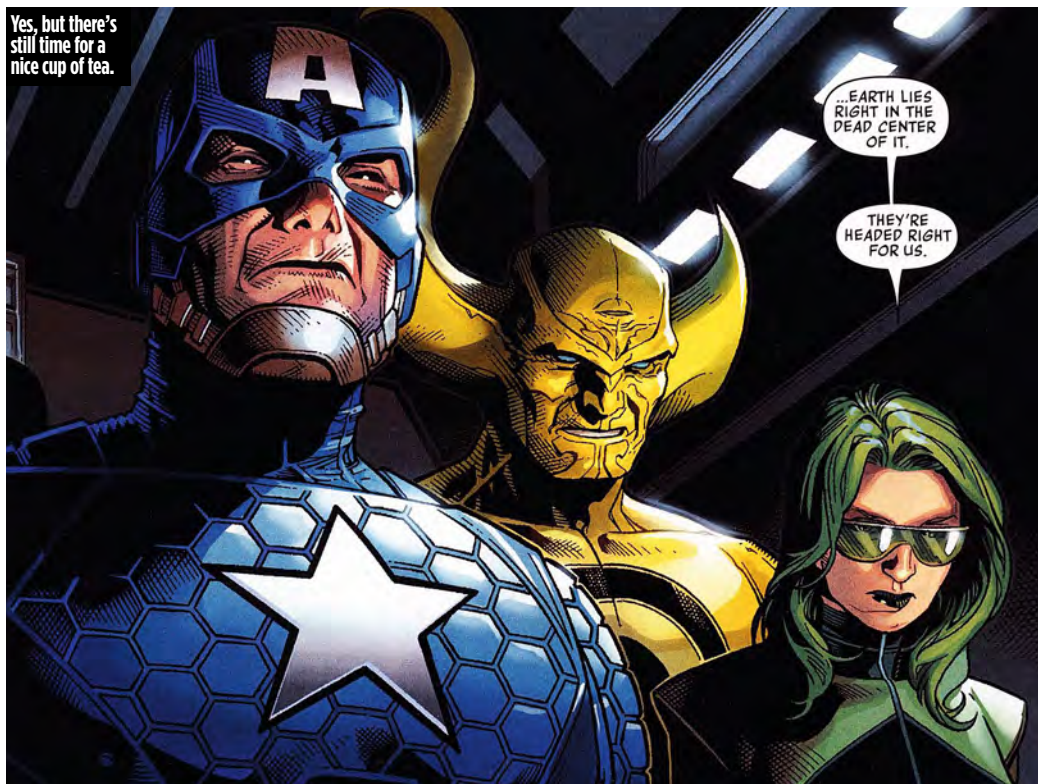
George R.R. Martin



Out now where all good books are sold



Yes, but there's still time for a nice cup of tea.



OVERVIEW

Infinity

To event comics – and beyond!

★★★★★

Release Date: OUT NOW!

\$3.99 | Publisher: Marvel
Writer: Jonathan Hickman

Artists: Jim Cheung, Jerome Opena, Dustin Weaver, Justin Ponsor



SPACE IS BIG

– really big – and Marvel's latest event comic wants you to be absolutely clear on this. Nobody could possibly complain about mind-boggling epic *Infinity* feeling too small, and while *Avengers Vs X-Men* may have come down to "Various Avengers and X-Men hit each other until a winner is declared", *Infinity* is something different and more complex.

A multi-layered six-issue miniseries (three issues in at the time of writing) that's delivering strong setpieces and explosive action, *Infinity* also shows up recent DC events like *Trinity War* by actually having a distinct style and personality. Admittedly, this is a Jonathan Hickman-written comic, so the style is brainy, intricate and

occasionally a little chilly, but the end result is a sharply crafted and satisfying superhero tale.

The basic setup is that Earth is under threat from a massive fleet piloted by the Builders, an alien race responsible for directing evolution across the galaxy, who've now decided to burn it all down. The Avengers head off to space to join the fight, but what they don't know

Nobody could complain about it being too small

is that evil titan Thanos is waiting in the wings, and now has the ideal opportunity to target Earth for his own nefarious ends...

Event comics have become their own particular subgenre, and while *Infinity* is a distinctive space opera, it has reverted to type in certain ways. With a massive cast of over 50

characters there's not much room for quieter moments, and while Hickman has done a good job of making the core miniseries work as a self-contained read, it still has moments where it feels like a cut-down version of action that's taking place in crossover issues.

There's a wide selection of these, but the crossovers that count are in the *Avengers* and *New Avengers* titles, where Hickman has been building towards *Infinity*'s events since the start of his run in late 2012. Dealing with the Avengers' spacebound battles and the actions of the mysterious Illuminati, both these titles are also written by Hickman, and add extra scale and depth to the already massive story.

With eye-opening visuals and impressive spectacle from a broad team of artists (with Jerome Opena's luridly striking work the best of the bunch), *Infinity* is both a gripping adventure and a fine teaser for anyone wanting to sample Marvel's more cosmic titles before next year's *Guardians Of The Galaxy* movie arrives. It probably won't change anyone's mind on big, splashy event comics, but so far it's an enjoyably gnarly space opera that serves up the kind of titanic clashes and widescreen action that superhero comics do exceptionally well. **Saxon Bullock**

? *Infinity* is also laying the seeds for Marvel's next event, the Inhumans-based "Inhumanity", which starts in December.

Now that's fighting talk.



GRAPHIC NOVEL

Aama: The Smell Of Warm Dust

A cerebral planetary odyssey

★★★★★

Release Date: 7 November

88 pages | £12.99 (hardback)

Publisher: SelfMade Hero

Writer/artist: Frédéric Peeters



CRAFTING A

science fiction graphic novel is a bit like making a salad (You have to do a lot of tossing? – Reviews

Ed). But the variety of ingredients – or inspirations – from which you can select has a tendency to overwhelm most creators.

That's one reason *Aama* works so well – its author, Swiss artist Frédéric Peeters, appears unburdened by the weight of influence. He adds a pinch of Ridley Scott here, a drop of Paul Verhoeven there... Just enough to spice things up but never overwhelm the taste of a fresh tale that's both suspenseful and elegiac.

This first volume, told in flashback, introduces Verloc Nim, a divorcee addict who's lost his inheritance as a result of rejecting his post-apocalyptic society's body modifications. After being found in the gutter by his brother Conrad, a corporate spy, he joins him and his super-powered robot ape Churchill in the investigation of an off-world colony of scientists threatened by a renegade android.

Peeters's art perfectly complements his story. A blend of Guy Davis and contemporary French illustrators like Christopher Blaine (with a hint of '70s anthology *Métal Hurlant*), it too knows when to walk its own path and when to wear its influences on its sleeve. The ending's abruptness, in which Verloc finds love among the colonists, leaves you hungry for volume two. **Joseph McCabe**

? Frédéric Peeters's wife and her daughter are both HIV positive. His 2001 book *Blue Pills* is a memoir about them.

OVERVIEW

Lazarus

Game Of Clones



Release Date: OUT NOW!

\$2.99 | Publisher: Image

Writer: Greg Rucka

Artist: Michael Lark



THE EISNER

Award-winning team behind *Gotham Central* reunite on *Lazarus*, a socio-political science fiction tale of post-economic collapse so morally complex that it makes *Elysium* look like an advert for Barclays.

We follow Forever, the "Lazarus" of the title. Lazaruses are members of wealthy families, engineered as powerful warriors to protect their family's interests in a future society where the gap between the rich and poor is so vast that an uprising is a constant risk.

Lazarus feels like *Game Of Thrones* – and not just because it features incestuous blonde twins.



Obviously discussing how long she was on hold for BT.

Forever is the sort of layered female character that would fit straight into George RR Martin's literary universe: a strong warrior woman who retains her femininity, despite her family's best efforts to repress her emotions.

Three issues in, and already the history is so dense that it requires a timeline across two letters pages, three introductions, and lengthy correspondence from writer Greg Rucka about the real science/politics behind events.

This is a weighty series. Which isn't to say it isn't fun – Michael Lark's art teases out the *Terminator*

influence of an indestructible killing machine protagonist, and moments of ultraviolence are breathtaking. Lark's clearly enjoying this world just as much as the writer, with panels depicting favela-style slums underneath a broken Hollywood sign feeling particularly resonant.

Rucka has a specific ending planned, but has said it'll take a long time to arrive. In the meantime, we'll cross our fingers that the world economy holds on until we get there.

Sam Ashurst

? Two influences on *Lazarus* are the Occupy movement and stem cell research. Warren Ellis advised Rucka to look into the latter.

OVERVIEW

The True Lives Of The Fabulous Killjoys

Gerard loses his way



Release Date: OUT NOW!

\$3.99 | Publisher: Dark Horse

Writers: Gerard Way, Shaun Simon

Artist: Becky Cloonan



WITH THE TWO

series of *The Umbrella Academy*, Gerard Way proved that he has a knack for creating Grant Morrison-esque offbeat superhero yarns worth exploring even if you aren't especially fond of the overwrought anthems he specialised in as the singer of My Chemical Romance.

An extrapolation of the backstory behind the emo rockers' final album *Danger Days*, *Killjoys* doesn't quite live up to the brash hype of its declamatory title. Co-written by

Way's fellow LA muso Shaun Simon, the six-parter centres on the increasingly fraught exploits of the archetypally named The Girl as she wanders around the harsh post-apocalyptic desert surrounding the dystopian metropolis of Battery City.

Four issues in and the narrative's various disparate elements have yet

to coalesce coherently. While the doomed romance between *Blade Runner*-esque porno droid Blue and her equally synthetic partner Red is poignantly depicted, ruthless corporate assassin Korse's equally illicit and ill-fated love affair is almost dismissively cast aside.

With Way and Simon's uneven script not always striking the right notes, it's left to Becky Cloonan to hold the show together with some superb, angular manga-like art. Shame, then, that *Killjoys* reads more like an off-cuts compilation than a magnum opus. **Stephen Jewell**

? Cloonan modeled Korse on Grant Morrison, who played him in the videos for My Chemical Romance's "Na Na Na" and "Sing".



Slaine's led a very quiet life...

GRAPHIC NOVEL

Slaine:
Book Of Scars

Celtic Conan reaches landmark



Release Date: 7 November

128 pages | £19.99 (hardback)

Publisher: Rebellion

Writer: Pat Mills

Artists: Clint Langley, Mike McMahon, Simon Bisley, Glenn Fabry



FOR ALL THE

talk of either Rogue Trooper or Strontium Dog following Judge Dredd's path to the big screen, the

Galaxy's Greatest Comic's Celtic barbarian could make a better candidate for celluloid adaptation.

Released to coincide with the 2000 AD favourite's 30th anniversary, this lavish collection not only serves as a compact introduction for newcomers but is also a compelling trip down memory lane for fans. Based around the affecting metaphor that Slaine's constantly wounded flesh is a veritable book of scars, it begins with the gruesome Guledig sending our hero back down the decades to relive his most momentous past battles.

Pat Mills leavens his refreshingly succinct script with some bawdy humour. But *Book Of Scars* is really just a vehicle for the talents of the various veteran illustrators that bring it gloriously to life, from Mike McMahon's delicate but manic cartooning to Simon Bisley's frenetic linework and Glenn Fabry's ornately detailed rendering. Mills's recent *ABC Warriors* foil Clint Langley, meanwhile, not only combines some expressive paintwork with some deft storytelling on the opening and closing sequences but also pays a fitting tribute to the late Massimo Belardinelli on second chapter "The Bride Of Crom." Many happy returns, big man!

Stephen Jewell

? First appearing in 1983, Slaine's debut "The Time Monster" was drawn by Pat Mills's then-wife Angela Kincaid.



Don't do it Ellen!
The game's not
that bad...

Beyond: Two Souls

Turning the Page



Release Date: OUT NOW!

£39.99 | Format: PS3

Publisher: Sony



A CONFUSING,

inconsistent jumble of themes and tone, *Beyond: Two Souls* can't decide whether it's a thriller, a supernatural horror, a coming-of-age teen drama, or an action movie. It leaps between time periods and genres so frequently that it's impossible to get invested in the story.

Jodie, played by an eerily lifelike Ellen Page, is linked to a ghostly entity she calls Aiden. As she goes through life, from toddler to stropky teenager, you control her not-so-imaginary friend, protecting her from danger. As Aiden, you can float around the world unseen, knocking stuff over, possessing people, and healing her injuries.

It's a neat idea, but executed with all the grace of a bulldozer. The script is terrible; a parade of bad dialogue and predictable situations. Jodie's predicaments are always the

same: she's backed into a corner, then Aiden comes to the rescue at the last minute – from malevolent spirits to teenage bullies and gropey rednecks trying to take advantage.

The characters are painted in such broad strokes they're like cartoons. No one feels like a human being except Jodie, which is down to Ellen Page's excellent performance, not the script. Willem Dafoe also puts in a solid turn as a doctor studying her powers, but all this does is highlight how weak the writing and supporting cast are.

There isn't much actual *game* here at all. It's a heavily scripted interactive film that you nudge along by hammering buttons and moving the analogue stick. Move the stick left to punch someone; tap X to climb something; press R1 to cut umbilical cord. Yes, really.

The best moments are when we see Jodie as a little girl, living with foster parents who are becoming aware of her otherworldly powers. Here we see the game's only glimmer of humour: when her mum won't give her a cookie from a jar on top of the fridge, you can control Aiden and

fetch her one. Otherwise, it's an oppressively maudlin experience. Barely a moment goes by when shiny tears aren't running down Page's magnificently-rendered cheeks.

These scenes are really well done, but then, just as you're feeling some emotional investment, the game makes another pointless leap to another part of her life, and suddenly you're choking soldiers to death in Mogadishu or dabbling in Native American mysticism. Even in a game where ghosts exist, the sight of Ellen Page effortlessly taking down a Somali warlord twice her size is hard to take seriously.

Beyond: Two Souls is a big, indulgent mess. It feels like 10 bad *X-Files* episodes playing out of sequence, spliced with 10 of those straight-to-video action films you find on racks near the checkouts in Homebase. The technology is stunning, with some of the most realistic-looking virtual actors we've ever seen, but it's wasted on such a dim-witted story. **Andy Kelly**

Ellen Page and Willem Dafoe didn't just provide their voice and likenesses, but their movements too, in a motion capture studio.



"I'm just saying
Legend of Link has
a nice ring to it"

The Legend Of Zelda: The Wind Waker HD

A Link to the future



Release Date: OUT NOW!

£44.99 | Format: WiiU

Publisher: Nintendo



THE INTERNET

being the internet, there was a time when the cel-shaded art style of the

GameCube's first *Zelda* resulted in calls for a boycott. A decade later and time has proven Nintendo right – *The Wind Waker* is a masterpiece, a game that will be as revered a decade from now as it is today.

It's for this reason that WiiU spit-and-polish *The Wind Waker HD* may seem like an unnecessary addition to the legend, but its visual and mechanical upgrades achieve the feat of improving on the original in many ways.

Set several centuries after *Ocarina Of Time*, *Wind Waker* eschews open fields for island hopping on the high seas. The quest is as epic and sublime as always, with a new fast sail and a streamlined Triforce hunt cutting down the fetch quest filter that previously soured the final stages.

The WiiU's second screen can be used as a map, or for item switching on the fly – an intuitive control scheme – while the Tingle Tuner has been replaced with the Tingle Bottle for leaving hints and images in other people's games.

The biggest draw is *Wind Waker*'s gorgeous HD makeover. Clarity has been improved drastically and lighting improved dramatically, giving the game a living claymation cartoon feel. Proof if it were needed that good art direction will always trump the fruitless quest for photo-realism in games. **Jordan Farley**

Wind Waker HD started out as a tech demo while the developers were playing with art styles for a brand new *Zelda*.



AUDIO CDs

Doctor Who

All You Need is *Who*

1963: Fanfare For The Common Men

★★★★★

Release Date: OUT NOW!

100 minutes | £14.99 (CD)/£12.99 (download)
Publisher: Big Finish

Destiny Of The Doctor: Night Of The Whisper

★★★★★

Release Date: OUT NOW!

80 minutes | £10.20 (CD)/£3.99 (download)
Publisher: AudioGO

Daleks Among Us

★★★★★

Release Date: OUT NOW!

125 minutes | £14.99 (CD)/£12.99 (download)
Publisher: Big Finish

The Lost Stories: The Dark Planet

★★★★★

Release Date: OUT NOW!

195 minutes | £14.99 (CD)/£12.99 (download)
Publisher: Big Finish

NOVEMBER 23RD IS

getting closer, and the *Doctor Who* 50th Anniversary celebrations have cranked up another gear with a new Big Finish audio trilogy set in the year of the show's birth.

The retro action begins in 1963: *Fanfare For The Common Men*, where a one-line reference to a pop band in *Who*'s first-ever episode gets expanded into a witty, fast-paced adventure. As the Fifth Doctor and Nyssa try to discover why The Beatles have been deleted from history and replaced by Liverpudlian trio The Common Men, the enjoyably twisty plot is backed up with great performances and crafty in-jokes, getting this celebratory trilogy off to a superb start.

The anniversary action continues in AudioGO's *Destiny Of The Doctor* series, which now takes on the Christopher Eccleston era. *Night Of The Whisper* sees the Ninth Doctor, Rose and Captain Jack visiting the pleasure-loving 23rd century colony New Vegas, where they get caught up in a showdown between a gangster and a mysterious crime-fighting vigilante. The story has a few clunky moments but otherwise does a good job of capturing the emotive, cartoony style of early RTD stories, while "voice of the Daleks"

Nicholas Briggs pulls off some strong narration (including a pretty good Eccleston impersonation).

Daleks Among Us gives us the conclusion of Big Finish's most recent Seventh Doctor trilogy, as the hunt for missing Nazi scientist Kurt Schalke brings the TARDIS to the planet Azimuth. Here, the Doctor ends up confronting the Daleks, and the result is a story that tackles challenging themes but doesn't always pull off its more ambitious ideas. Despite some jumbled storytelling, however, it's still an engaging listen that once again features an excellent central turn from Sylvester McCoy.

Finally, the *Lost Stories* range kicks off its concluding run of *Who* adventures that never made it to TV with *The Dark Planet*, a six-part tale featuring the TARDIS crew of the First Doctor, Ian, Barbara and Vicki. Adapted from a story by Ice Warriors creator Brian Hayles, it's a traditional Hartnell-era mix of science and morality as the Doctor and friends explore a planet where two alien races – one made of light, the other of shadow – are locked in a conflict of hatred and prejudice. Narrated by original show stars William Russell and Maureen O'Brien, it's a slow-paced but ultimately effective story that mixes *Who*'s earliest style with a genuinely cosmic sense of wonder. **Saxon Bullock**

Also out: vol eight of clipfest series *Doctor Who At The BBC*, and (on 7 Nov) a reading of the "An Unearthly Child" novelisation.



AUDIO CD

Jackanory: The Hobbit

Are you sitting comfortably?

★★★★★

Release Date: OUT NOW!

150 minutes | £13.25 (CD)
Publisher: AudioGO
Readers: Bernard Cribbins, Maurice Denham, Jan Francis, David Wood

FOR THOSE OF US WHO

grew up to love reading thanks to *Jackanory*, this audio release of one of the BBC TV show's most popular adaptations is a landmark event. Aired across two weeks in 1979, when it celebrated 3,000 episodes of the series, *The Hobbit* is lovingly made, evocative and really rather wonderful.

Narrated by the unspeakably posh Jan Francis, the story rattles along with a thoroughly British charm, is edited to perfection (no Dwarf washing-up song here), and stops to breathe in all the right places. Most of these places feature Bernard Cribbins as Bilbo Baggins, the most terrific piece of casting since Martin Freeman himself. No disrespect to Ian Holm, but if only Peter Jackson had seen Bernard at an audition, perhaps he would have played old Bilbo on the big screen.

The rest of the cast are decent, with Maurice Denham's Gandalf hitting all the right spots – even if he sounds more like Michael Gambon's Dumbledore. The Somerset-accented Gollum is glorious, with the only disappointment being Smaug: he's less "mighty dragon", more "old bloke who talks about cricket". Oh, and the episode recaps get a bit wearying, even if Francis reads them out with crystalline charm.

Episode endings, on the other hand, are pure childhood nostalgia, as she brightly tells you to come back tomorrow. "Goodbye, till then!" she chirps. And all of a sudden, you're 10 years old again.

Jayne Nelson

Cribbins read a total of 39 *Jackanory* stories, including *Alice In Wonderland* and *James And The Giant Peach*.

Box Of Delights

What we've been playing with this month

Kick-Ass 2 Figures

NECA | Height: 17cm-18cm | RRP £19.99 each | £19.99 (free delivery)

Feathers just don't scale down. Take The Motherfucker, whose cape-topping furry flourish has exploded in a noggin-consuming plume of black fluff. Poor Chloë Grace Moretz doesn't come out of the miniaturisation process too well either, looking more mutant than mini assassin. But Kick-Ass's boots look so convincingly grubby we're certain someone must have dragged the tiny clodhoppers through the mud by hand.

1966 Batman Action Figures

Mattel | Height: 15cm | RRP £24.99 | £21.99 (free delivery)

These action figures may not come with "Biff!", "Bam!" and "Bonk" action bubbles, but in every other primary-coloured detail they're the perfect reminder of a time when the Dark Knight wasn't really that dark at all. The likenesses are brilliant, right down to Frank Gorshin's Riddler sneer and the moustache Cesar Romero never quite managed to cover up with Joker make-up. And frankly we'd pay a lot of money to see the Christian Bale Caped Crusader in board shorts. (They're not making this up, you know - Adam West actually dressed like that in "Surf's Up! Joker's Under!")

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Walking Dead Plushies

Funko | Height: 19cm-26cm | RRP £14.99 | £11.99 (free delivery)

You wouldn't normally say a reanimated corpse is "adorable", but that's exactly the word we'd use to describe this *Walking Dead* pair. Top is the well zombie from season two; below is the "bicycle girl" zombie from the very first episode. As in the show, bicycle girl is missing her legs, but comes with hair that's nice to run over your hands... The well zombie comes apart at the waist via Velcro, but is permanently held together by some stringy intestines. He even has a rope round his waist - perfect for practical jokes!



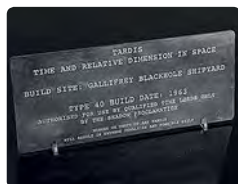
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www.rubbertoereplicas.com
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Does the Doctor worry about getting tea stains on the TARDIS console? Now it seems we have the answer - and these coasters look pretty good for human use too.



TARDIS DOOR REPLICA

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Rubbertoe say they've done everything to make this replica of the little door on the front of the TARDIS accurate. The question is, is a TARDIS door much use without a TARDIS on it?



Man Of Steel Figure

NECA | Height: 46cm | RRP £89.99 each | £79.99 with free UK delivery

With 30 points of articulation (including, for some reason, the ability to turn his legs 180 degrees around at thigh level), this quarter-scale poseable figure features the costume from Zack Snyder's recent slice of demolition porno, with an authentically rough texture like a matchbox edge. He has a luxurious fabric cape, and interchangeable hands, so you can swap between straight hands for karate chops and clenched fists for punching. The face is 90% Henry Cavill, 10% the pursed lips of *The X-Files*' Smoking Man.

Frank Miller Superman Statue

DC Collectibles | Height: 25cm | RRP £79.99 | £59.99 (free delivery)

With his ridiculous quiff and suspect politics, the Supes of Frank Miller's *The Dark Knight Returns* is, well, kind of a dick. But if you want a reminder of the awesome power wielded by this pompous government lackey, then this is for you. The colours are vivid and he's accurately modelled after the pose he strikes when dodging the six hunter missiles Batman launches at him to test his strength before the final battle. Don't let the name "Man of Steel" fool you, though: this cold-cast porcelain figurine is extremely fragile. Supermen modelled after Lee Bermejo and Jim Lee are soon to follow, and will presumably smash just as easily when dropped on a desk by our halfwit reviewer.

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ETA: NOVEMBER

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EXPECT TO PAY
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ELEVENTH DOCTOR RETRO ACTION FIGURE

ETA: DECEMBER

This old-school version of Matt Smith's Doctor (styled after the Mego figures of the '70s) really needs to find himself a better tailor - his clothes may be made of real fabric but that baggy look is so last century. And hasn't he nicked his collar from Harry Hill? Still, this eight-inch figure from Bif Bang Pow! does come with a sonic. A First Doctor figure is also set for release.



EXPECT TO PAY
£15

SPECIAL WEAPONS DALEK

ETA: NOVEMBER

My, what a big gun you have, Mr Dalek. Considering that your average Dalek isn't reluctant to do a bit of fighting, this enhanced chap from 1988 Sylvester McCoy story "Remembrance Of The Daleks" must be living war 24 hours a day, 365 days a year - and loving it, no doubt. What he lacks in elegance he makes up for with sound effects and speech.

AUTHORS

Synopsis and sample chapters welcome,
please send to:

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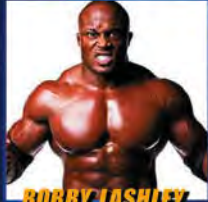
DOMINIC KEATING
STAR TREK



ETHAN PHILLIPS
STAR TREK



MARIA KANELIS
WWE WRESTLER



BOBBY LASHLEY
MMA FIGHTER/WRESTLER



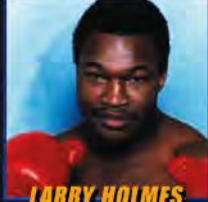
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DOCTOR WHO



JEREMY BULLOCH
STAR WARS



LALLA WARD
DOCTOR WHO



LARRY HOLMES
BOXER



STEPHEN THORNE
DOCTOR WHO



JAKE LLOYD
STAR WARS



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SHANE RANGI
LORD OF THE RINGS



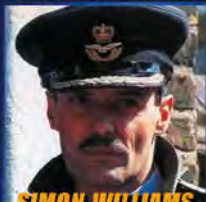
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CHRISTOPHER RYAN
THE YOUNG ONES



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VIEW SCREEN

SMALL SCREEN:
BIGGER PICTURE

DAVE BRADLEY,
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



Some TV shows are destined to have a small but faithful following, while others will become bona fide phenomena.

However much

we hope our current obsessions (in my case, *Continuum* and *The Almighty Johnsons*) will hit the big time, the truth is that just a few heavyweight series will punch their weight in the mainstream cultural arena. Right now that's *Doctor Who*, *The Walking Dead*, *Game Of Thrones* and... *Agents Of SHIELD*. Yep, a single fresh show looks set to be babbled about on street corners as much as at geek cons, thanks to Marvel's recent dominance at the box office. By the time you read this we'll already be a few episodes in on Channel 4 and ABC, but I've penned a few words about its winning formula on the right there.

This is the season when the schedules are sardined with prime genre programmes, so View Screen will continue to provide insightful commentary into the best and worst of them. Over the next few issues we'll be making small but important changes to how this section functions. For starters we've moved its location in the magazine, and we've dropped the league table that used to be taken from the website, but there'll be more substantial tweaks in future – stay tuned! In the meantime, remember we always want to know what you're enjoying or despising, so stay connected with us via Twitter (@SFXmagazine), Facebook (Facebook.com/SFXmagazine) or email us at sfx@futurenet.com.



BROADCAST US: TUESDAYS ON ABC / UK: FRIDAYS ON CHANNEL 4

Super Humans

AGENTS OF SHIELD: Meta and Marvellous

A FICTIONAL UNIVERSE DATING back over 50 years, backed by one of the world's biggest media companies, written and directed by a man who's not only a Hollywood money magnet but also undeniably the world's biggest geek icon... How could *Agents Of SHIELD* not be genetically engineered for success? Well, *Dollhouse* was also by Joss Whedon and backed by Fox so it is possible for a series to drop the ball despite the best omens; but here are two big reasons why *Agents Of SHIELD* doesn't:

1 IT'S PART OF THE BIGGER UNIVERSE
Agents Of SHIELD acknowledges everything that's gone before, including the New York crisis from *Avengers Assemble* and Agent Coulson's "death". It opens with glimpses of Iron Man and the Hulk – toy figures of whom exist in shops within the universe – and openly refers to the discovery of gods like Thor and the impact of that knowledge on ordinary people. If you haven't seen *Iron Man 3* it doesn't matter, you're not excluded from the storytelling, but if you have then there's extra weight behind the appearance of Extremis. There are references to gamma radiation, alien technology and super

soldier serum right from the first episode to remind you that this all connects. Too arch? Nah, the show doesn't lay it on too thick, but with *Avengers Assemble* being the third highest-grossing film worldwide and the highest-grossing film ever released by Disney, surely everybody is a Marvel geek these days? Whedon is canny to join the dots so unashamedly. It means that the series arrives boasting a flourishing, established setting from the first minute, and the opening episodes can concentrate on the characters rather than scene setting.

2 IT'S META AND FUNNY
Whether it's J August Richards's sort-of villain declaring "it's an origin story!", or Agent Coulson apologising for a bulb being out when he steps from the shadows, or Agent Ward declaring that the purpose of the agency's acronym is simply "somebody really wanted our initials to spell out SHIELD", this is a series that accepts the

FACT ATTACK!

- Joss Whedon's *Mutant Enemy* is named after a line in "And You And I" by prog rockers Yes.
- SHIELD (now Strategic Homeland Intervention, Enforcement and Logistics Division) originally stood for Supreme Headquarters, International Espionage, Law-Enforcement Division.
- Clark Gregg wrote the screenplay for Robert Zemeckis's 2000 horror film *What Lies Beneath*.



conventions of the genre and plays with them. Almost every scene ends with a zinger and it has the same rhythm *Avengers Assemble* had in its most conversational scenes. Well, what else would you expect from the creator of *Buffy* and *The Cabin In The Woods*? It always delights me that *Buffy* continues to be such a cultural touch point for geeks and genre fans ten years after it finished (let that sink in) but that's because of the enduring power of Whedon's vision: not just his characterisation and storytelling, but also his understanding that everybody watching is in on the same joke. Of course everybody following a story set in Marvelville – and hell, that's pretty much everybody in the English-speaking world at the moment – understands the format and so it would be artificial for the characters on screen to suffer "genre blindness". Better to make a joke of it all.

So, it's more than just budget that makes this a very different show to *Torchwood*. That team's relentless incompetence and desire to shag everything aside, the similarities are there: *Torchwood* was a spin-off from a larger universe about a small team of humans dealing with supernatural or alien threats, led by a man back from the dead. But *Torchwood* rarely felt like it was telling us anything new about the *Doctor Whoniverse* and it was never so unashamedly genre savvy – calling the memory drug Retcon being one rare example – that you felt compelled to recite lines to your mates. Given the twin elements of Marvel intertextuality and Whedon's penchant for self-awareness, *Agents Of SHIELD* by comparison is a show that's surely destined for hero status. **Dave Bradley**

MINDPROBE •

David Lyons

Meet *Revolution*'s Sebastian "Bass" Monroe

Where's Monroe in the aftermath of the nuclear strikes?

Well, I'm not a drunkard, but a bit of a loner in a travelling carnival, of sorts.

Will he remain a loner or has his militia experience and this outcome changed him?

I think he was alone for the first season. He was holding that tiger by the tail and was scared it would turn around and eat him. He destroyed everyone that was around him. Now he's lost that. But he doesn't need it.

He doesn't need power any more?

Everyone on the show seems to be obsessed with power and I don't think he is. He's been yearning for family and love. He's had three months since the nuclear fallout and that's a lot of time to reflect on what he's done.

Is it hard not to judge Monroe as a character when you're playing him?

You try not to, you try desperately not to. I reckon it feels like when Monroe does something, there is a very strong emotional tethering to the purpose and it's completely flawed. We are all judges of everyone but when you are in it, you try desperately to understand why. I also keep finding these clues that it's about love and family and losing everything that propels him.

Where does Monroe stand on his feelings about Miles?

I think he still holds deep, deep affection for Miles and what they had.

Tom accused Monroe of having a borderline erotic fixation on Miles last season. What's your take on that?

It's never the way I played it but I get why people say that. People get weirdly put off by two men that love each other – like brothers love each other, or the way I love my best mate. Sexuality is irrelevant. But for somebody like Neville who wants the power, maybe he believes it but he knows it riles Monroe. **Tara Bennett**

Revolution returns to Sky1 this month.





BROADCAST CURRENTLY AIRING ON CBBC, MONDAYS & TUESDAYS; CATCH-UP ON IPLAYER

Happy Howling

WOLFBLOOD: Welcome back to the Tyne & Wear-wolves

WOLFBLOOD MAY BE broadcast on CBBC, but now in its second year, it can hardly still be called Britain's best-kept telefantasy secret. Its launch last year may not have come with much fanfare, but this earthly mystical *Teen Wolf*-meets-*Grange-Hill* mongrel was soon the biggest show on the channel. But to call it a "gateway drug" to adult telefantasy is

doing it a disservice. It's just as much a tasty snack between meals for the more seasoned geek with access to iPlayer.

If you haven't fallen under the show's spell yet, it is, in a nutshell, a school-based drama about a Geordie lass (Maddy) and Welsh lad (Rhyddian) who just happen to be werewolf variants called Wolfbloods (most of the differences being handy for budget, time slot

and storytelling reasons). Set in Northumbria, it boasts some gorgeous forest landscapes, great CG wolves and some snarky dialogue that *Buffy* would be proud of. And while it has teen drama in spades, it doesn't have its characters whinging incessantly about being cursed all the time; being a Wolfblood may come with problems, but generally Rhyddian and Maddy love being what they are.

Season two has, so far (we've seen four episodes at time of press), been an impressively assured return. Production wise it feels slicker (the CG werewolves have certainly improved), and the cast are oozing with confidence. New regular character Jana – a wild Wolfblood who fancies Rhyddian and is trying to become domesticated to nab him – is an inspired addition, enabling a lot of culture clash fun ("I love flushing the toilet!" she enthuses at one point). There's a potentially incendiary teen love triangle a-brewing. Hints of silver-bullet-armed hunters and *Wicker Man*-esque pagan fairs are enriching the show's mythology. There's even an addiction metaphor that doesn't involve vampires and blood! It's amazing how much the writers pack into each 25 minutes.

Wolfblood also has the most loveable embarrassing parents on TV. Hmm, could there be some audience identification for the show's iPlaying fans going on here? **Dave Golder**

FACT ATTACK!

- ▶ In episode four of season two, "Total Eclipse Of The Moon", Shannon actress Louisa Connolly-Burnham sang all her vocals live, with no lip-synching or auto tuning. And what a great voice she has too.
- ▶ *Wolfblood* creator Debbie Moon tells SFX that one of her biggest frustrations about being the showrunner is that she has to write all the big dramatic episodes, but she yearns to do one of the comedy ones!
- ▶ The CG werewolves are created by a German company called Trixter, which has worked on *Iron Man 3*, *The Avengers* and *Cloud Atlas*.

BROADCAST CURRENTLY AIRING ON BBC ONE, SATURDAYS IN THE UK; PREMIERES ON 23 NOVEMBER ON BBC AMERICA IN THE US

Myth Busting

ATLANTIS: It's like *Merlin* on his Greek hols

ANYONE EXPECTING *MERLIN* in togas... congratulations! Whether or not that's a good thing depends on how much you liked *Merlin*. The setting, tunics and a few character dynamics have changed, but the underlying ethos is the same: a stylishly-produced family fantasy adventure, based on a myth most of the audience will have a vague idea about, with a bit of humour, a lot of action, a frequently shirtless male lead and some bromance.

We have Alexander Siddig in the Anthony Head role (a king who used to be in another franchise), Juliet Stevenson as a female spin on the Richard Wilson mentor role and Jemima Rooper as Medusa, clearly destined to go down the Morgana route. *Merlin* creators Johnny

Capps and Julian Murphy have a hit formula and they're gonna use it.

The cosmetic differences: we're in the (not yet lost) city of Atlantis, with the writers plundering Greek myths instead of Arthurian



ones. There's a *Farscape* vibe going in with our present-day hero, Jason, ("That's not a hero's name!" retorts Hercules) being flung back in time in the search for his father. He's not quite as quipping as John Crichton but he has his moments ("Your triangles will bore students for centuries!" he tells new pal Pythagoras).

There's a three-way bromance this time. Jason is flatsharing with Pythagorus and Hercules for a spot of Grecian *Men Behaving*

Badly. Mark Addy's yarn-spinning Falstaffian reinvention of Hercules is one of the highlights and this charismatic central trio could be the key to the show's success.

It's unashamedly cheesy in places, and the female characters are – for the moment at least – animated set-dressing. But it looks spectacular, the CG is very impressive for TV, and the snappy dialogue makes up for any leaden plotting. Fingers crossed it improves as much as *Merlin* did. **Dave Golder**

FACT ATTACK!

- ▶ Jason actor Jack Donnelly's previous telefantasy credit was playing a large, white rabbit in *Misfits*.
- ▶ Donnelly ended up in A&E during filming when he mistakenly used a real knife instead of a stunt knife, and stabbed himself in the arm.
- ▶ The show is filmed in Morocco and a former giant refrigerated warehouse in Chepstow.
- ▶ Many of the props were bought by the makers from bazaars in Morocco.



BROADCAST US: TUESDAYS ON FOX / UK: WEDNESDAYS ON UNIVERSAL CHANNEL

No Sleeping Allowed

SLEEPY HOLLOW: A show that gallops a bit too fast

AS I WRITE THIS, I'VE ONLY had the chance to watch the very first episode of *Sleepy Hollow*. It's a tough job, summing up whether I'm going to like an entire series based on its pilot. But then again, if people couldn't do it, no shows would ever get made. First impressions are important, but in this great old world of television we've learned to give bad pilots a break, good pilots a suspicious eyeballing in case they're an anomaly, and mediocre pilots the dignity of a grace period, just in case.

Sleepy Hollow's first episode is a mixture of all of these. The IMDb lists it as having seven writers and boy, can you tell. It's as though each of them brought an idea and hung onto it, tooth and nail, insisting on it making it into the episode despite common sense tapping them on

the shoulder and saying, "Maybe you should hold that back for later in the season?"

There's just *so much* to take in! Ichabod Crane (a charismatic and, thank god, pleasingly funny Tom Mison) is swept up from a Revolutionary War battlefield and dropped into 21st century America; a Headless Horseman follows him; his witch wife is trapped in some kind of alternate dimension; the policewoman, Abbie Mills (Nicole Beharie), who befriends him is just about to leave town to train for the FBI; her partner is murdered; she discovers he spent years investigating weird shit in the town; another colleague is killed by a demon; she blacked out as a child after seeing weird stuff in a forest; her sister went mad; the Horseman is controlled by his severed head; he is none other than Death; the rest of the Horsemen of the

Apocalypse are on the way... I mean, seriously? All this in 45 minutes? (And don't get me started on the fact that Abbie goes off with Ichabod despite the fact he's crazy. He's not even wearing *handcuffs*. I ask you.)

I blame *The Vampire Diaries*, a show that moves its plot arcs along so quickly that if a character had a baby at the start of a season, they'd be in college by the time November rolls around. *Sleepy Hollow* has such a good pedigree with creators Alex Kurtzman and Roberto Orci (their *Star Trek* connection no doubt led to the casting of John Cho in this opener) that it would be sad to see such a good premise ruined by over-enthusiastic writing that just *has* to run out of steam. Nothing can run at this pace without dropping dead. Like the unfortunate Horseman, this show really needs to keep its head.

Jayne Nelson

FACT ATTACK!

- Clancy Brown guest-stars as *Sleepy Hollow's* Sheriff, losing his head in the show's first act. Yet another beheading for the *Highlander* star, who has made a bit of a habit of dying on screen.
- Orlando Jones plays police Captain Frank Irving, named for *Sleepy Hollow* author Washington Irving.
- Pedantic point one: Crane says "Lefftenant", the correct British pronunciation. Yes!
- Point two: It's the *Book of Revelation*, not *Revelations*. Ah well...

YOU HAVE BEEN WATCHING... UNDER THE DOME

SFX's Facebook and Twitter followers share their thoughts on the show's first year

► **Mark Wilson:** I didn't realise I was watching the finale. Very anti-climactic.

► **Claire M Hutt:** I like that they are thinking of real concerns, lack of food and water and propane. What happens when these things run out?

► **Paul G J Brewer:** After a very promising opening episode it descended into such a ho hum

show, with banal dialogue and clunky plotting.

► **Stuart Claw:** One thing that did anger me was their depiction of diabetes; whilst I applaud them for wanting to show it to make a point, they did the typical Hollywood thing and created their own version of the condition and symptoms to suit their needs.

► **Sam Burton:** The only decent thing about it was Dean Norris. The rest of the characters spoke like they were in some dodgy '90s computer game.

► **Damien May:** They obviously ran out of money for effects. After the mother of all bombs destroys *everything* as far as the eye can see, the next episode clearly shows

no damage when the two teenagers were making out against the dome.

► **Sanchia Pegley:** Intrigued but confused! Love the acting and enjoying a bit of Stephen King. But lost interest toward the end...

► **Liisa Lehtio:** *Heroes*, *The Event*, *Lost*... I'm getting bored of these shows with a big

secret in their arc that fizzle out into nothing. I am amazed this has already got a second series.

► **Mike Copley:** Well directed, written and acted - but the bulk of onscreen time is taken up with soapy drama.



TOTAL RECALL

PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS OF TIMELESS SF



View-Master



RUSSELL LEWIN, PRODUCTION EDITOR

Recently when my parents came to visit they brought with them, besides the usual cans of tinned tomatoes, home-made chutney, Penguin biscuits and new mugs, my old View-Master and some

View-Master reels. "We thought you might like them – um, they're science fiction-y..."

I was delighted, because I hadn't seen them for years and had assumed they'd long disappeared from the family house, along with my *Star Wars* figures (aaargh!), *Tiger* comics and Mexican Hulk moneybox. I sat down and clasped the red toy with alacrity, slotted one of the discs in and drew it up to my eyes. And lo, I was instantly cast back in time.

What's funny is that virtually all the View-Master discs they brought me are indeed SF-themed. There's *Doctor Who: Full Circle*, *Moonraker*, *Buck*

Rogers, The Incredible Hulk, *Spider-Man*, *Scooby-Doo*, *The Muppet Movie*, *Terrahawks* – and a reel of EPCOT, Disney's futureworld in Florida, which I suppose is kind of SF-y too. Sticking my orbs to the viewing portals reminded me of how I used to imagine I was in a cinema; the pic in the middle was the screen, the blackness around was the surroundings of the theatre.

What was less good – but not without its curious charm – was how deteriorated many of the images now were. And what was worse, some of the discs were missing! There's only one *Doctor Who: Full Circle* disc left, thereby depriving me of the pleasure of seeing the Marshmen and the Marsh Spiders in glorious 3D! (The 3D is rudimentary but

at the same time brilliant, one of my favourite frames being in *The Incredible Hulk* where the Absorbing Man is red on one image and yellow on the other, giving a splendid sort of flashing orange effect.)

Of course I was straight to the internet to see how many hundreds of pounds my collection would now be worth. And as is usually the case, finding out it's not much. You can get most sets for a tenner or so.

But no matter. It's great to have it back, it's great to be reminded of the simple pleasures of childhood – and it's better than yet more mugs. **SFX**

FACT ATTACK!

- ▶ The only other *Doctor Who* View-Master reels were from Peter Davison's debut story "Castrovalva".
- ▶ The first View-Masters went on sale in 1939, just in time to stop looking at World War Two. Instead you could look at caverns, canyons and hills and that.
- ▶ In 1971 a talking View-Master arrived!
- ▶ Other vintage SFX-friendly reels include *Thunderbirds*, *Mork & Mindy*,

Tron, *The Dark Crystal*, *Star Trek*, *The Tripods*, *Superman The Movie* and *The Six Million Dollar Man*.

▶ In 2009 it was announced that *Fringe* co-producer Brad Caleb Kane would be making a View-Master movie. Nothing yet.

▶ There are apparently around a billion different View-Master reels – better get collecting sharpish!

SEE YOU NEXT MONTH! WEDNESDAY 13 NOVEMBER DETAILS ON PAGE 29

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